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# MISSION WORK

IN THE

# FORESTS OF GUIANA.

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OPENING OF THE CANNIBAL MOUND ON WARAMURI HILL.

*Frontispiece.* *Page* 136.

# MISSION WORK

## AMONG THE INDIAN TRIBES

IN THE

## FORESTS OF GUIANA.

BY THE

REV. W. H. BRETT, B.D.,

*Missionary in connection with the S.P.G.; Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Guiana, and late Rector of the Parish of Holy Trinity, Essequibo.*

*WITH MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS.*

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# PREFACE

SOME of the following sketches appeared a few years ago, in the periodical called *Mission Life.*

To them are now added others, descriptive—not only of the country and its inhabitants, with the work of the first pioneers of the Gospel amongst them—but also of the efforts since made, and still going on, to spread still farther the knowledge of Christ, and complete, by God's blessing, the spiritual conquest of Guiana.

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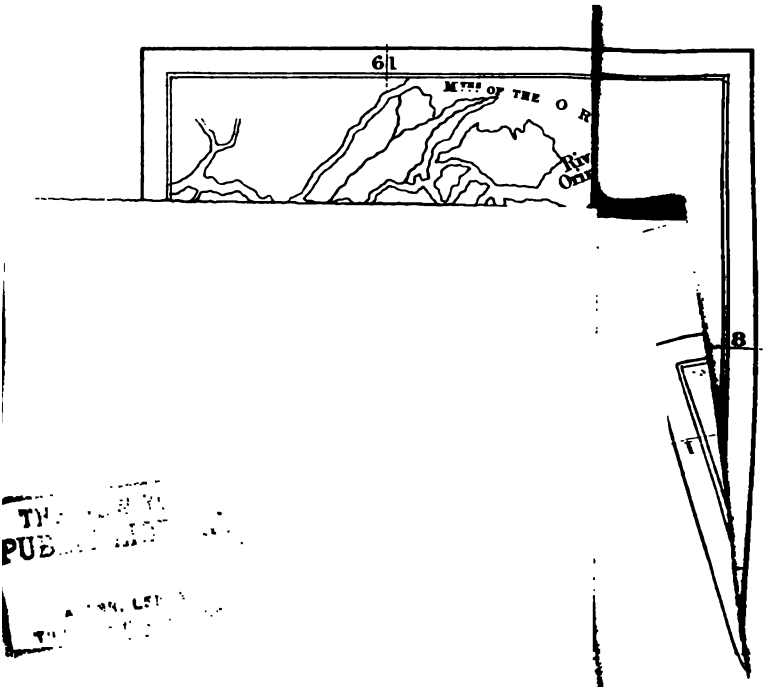
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# MISSION WORK

# IN THE FORESTS OF GUIANA.

## INTRODUCTORY SKETCH.

THE stranger who, after visiting the beautiful West Indian Islands, approaches the shores of Guiana, may look in vain for a continuation of the grand and romantic scenery he has left. The very ocean seems to have changed its aspect; for he is no longer sailing over the clear blue waters of the Caribbean Sea, but all around him is rendered turbid by the mud and sand poured into it from the mighty Orinoco, the Essequibo, and other great continental rivers.

The shore he is approaching seems low and tame. It has neither precipice nor ravine to attract attention, and no blue mountain-peaks appear on the distant horizon. There is, indeed, in the in-

terior, much scenery that is grand and beautiful in its wildness; but that is far distant, and only a line of trees appears stretching along the level coast.

The tall chimneys of sugar estates, rising behind the courida and mangrove trees which cover the shore, show that the land is inhabited by a civilized race. They show also that it is not visited by those hurricanes which, from time to time, devastate the West Indian Islands; nor subject to the earthquakes which often work terrible destruction on the opposite coast of South America.

Could our stranger take a bird's-eye view of the colony before him, he would see that, from the handsome city of Georgetown, at the mouth of the Demerara, a line of sugar plantations extends on either side; along the line of coast, and for a few miles up the principal rivers. Negroes, who form the great bulk of the population, would be seen cultivating the bright green fields, with some Portuguese, and many Asiatic immigrants, Hindoo and Chinese. Churches, chapels, and schools, studding the line of coast, would show the efforts that have been made to Christianize and educate the motley population.

A survey of the distant interior would show that, beyond that narrow strip of cultivation, dense tropical forests stretch over many thousands of square miles. They are intersected here and there by fine rivers, and broken by mountain ranges and open savannah lands.

That wild interior is very thinly inhabited by

aboriginal tribes, who speak various languages, but are alike in their copper-coloured skins and straight black hair.

The Arawâks, near the coast, are the only known representatives of the gentle (and once numerous) race found by Columbus in the larger West Indian Islands, and exterminated there by the Spaniards.

Their neighbours, the Caribs, are the continental remnant of that fierce race which once spread terror by sea and land.

The Waraus inhabit the swamp-lands around the mouths of the Orinoco.

In the distant interior dwell the Acawóios, Macūsis, Arecūnas, Wápisiánas, Atórais, Tarumas, and many others beyond the British boundary.

Of most of these races, and the efforts made to propagate the Gospel amongst them, some account will be given in the following sketches.

It may be sufficient here to say that no effort for their evangelization was made by the Dutch, who first colonized the land. During their rule, however, the Moravians planted a mission on the Berbice, which lasted from 1738 to 1763, when it was destroyed during the terrible negro insurrection. The brethren then removed to the Corentyn and Surinam.

The first *English* effort for the benefit of the aborigines was made in 1829, by the Church Missionary Society, at Bartica, on the Essequibo.[1]

[1] See "Missionary Labours in British Guiana," by Rev. J. H. Bernau. 1847.

It was conducted by Mr. J. Armstrong, who was succeeded by the Rev. T. Youd. The Rev. J. H. Bernau afterwards took charge of that parent mission, while Mr. Youd went to commence another in the far distant interior. He selected as the scene of his labours the Indian village of Pirara, on the shore of the lake Amucu, near the Parima. There, in the visionary ideas which prevailed three centuries ago, El Dorado, "the gilded" prince, had been supposed to reign in the golden city of Manoa. That delusion—fatal to thousands, who perished amidst swamps and forests, while vainly seeking the lake and golden city—spread wide and lasted long. It infected men of various European nations—the scholar as well as the adventurer. Even our Milton, in his greatest poem, speaks of the—

> "Yet unspoiled
> Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons
> Call El Dorado."

And it was not finally exploded until the fatal expedition from Venezuela in 1775-76; in which hundreds perished, and from which only one man returned.[1]

The mission established by Mr. Youd on that, which may be called classic, ground, was, for a short period, very successful. Sir R. Schomburgk, who, in the course of his explorations, visited the spot more than once, speaks of its prosperous condition in 1838; and of its destruction in 1839 by

[1] Humboldt's "Views of Nature," p. 138.

the Brazilians, who took possession of the rude church which the Macusis had built, and drove away the missionary.

Ere the latter event took place, Dr. Coleridge, the first bishop of Barbados (which diocese then included Guiana), had resolved to extend the sphere of labour, by planting a mission in the Indian territory, which extends from the cultivated coast of Essequibo to the Delta of the Orinoco—a swampy and savage district, which the Dutch had named "the Wild Coast."

At his request, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts sent out the Rev. C. Carter and myself, to commence the work there.

We arrived in the beginning of 1840. The mission at Pirara had by that time been broken up, and the only foothold of the Church amongst the native tribes was at her first station, Bartica, on the Essequibo.

# I.

## AFRICAN JEANNETTE.

(1840-41.)

**Bush negroes—Abandoned huts—Reception of a missionary—Disinterested kindness—Efforts to get a school—Attention during sickness—Unfortunate marriage of Jeannette, and its sad result.**

IN the backwoods of Surinam and Cayenne[1] there are many thousands of negroes, descendants of those who in the last century successively threw off the yoke of slavery, and after many

[1] Dutch and French Guiana.

bloody contests established themselves as independent hordes.

Those Bush negroes, as they are called, now possess much of the territory once occupied by the copper-coloured and straight-haired aboriginal Indians, whose habits of life they have adopted,—assuming also their feathered head-dresses, necklaces, bracelets of beads, and other ornaments. Their strongholds are amidst the cataracts of the Marowini and the swamps and marshes of the interior, and they are virtually masters there, having their own chiefs to rule over them. They have retained many African superstitions, and, mingled with them, those of the red men whom they have supplanted.

The Moravian Brethren, who laboured first, during the last century, among the aboriginal Indians in those parts, and when driven by various calamities from that field of labour found consolation and employment in evangelizing the slaves of Surinam, have, since the emancipation of the latter, laboured also with some success amongst the Bush negroes there.

In the north-western colonies of Guiana (which at the commencement of this century came under British rule), the slaves made many attempts to escape to the forests, and live there in independence. But they were baffled by the energies of a few determined white men, assisted by the Indians of various nations, who received annual presents from the colonists, and whose evident interest it was to keep

their country to themselves. Hence, though bodies of black men escaped from time to time, they were always tracked to their retreats, and the red men alone roamed the forests of Berbice, Demerara, and Essequibo, as their fathers had done.

On the banks of the rivers of those three colonies there was, however, a considerable mixed population, some being woodcutters, belonging to the plantations, and others free settlers—negroes and mulattoes. Zealous clergymen had visited them from time to time, and at the period of the British emancipation there were a few buildings here and there, of rough boards or of wattle and thatch, which were used as places of meeting for the occasional worship held amongst them.

One of those rude erections stood at the confluence of the Pomeroon and Arapaiaco, where the wild Indian territory commences which stretches to and beyond the Orinoco. It had been put up by the Rev. Mr. Duke in the country of the Arawâks, and it was thought that that race might receive the gospel if offered to them there by a missionary clergyman and assistant catechist.

Our Lord, we read, sent forth His disciples "by two and two;" and independently of that, the *highest* sanction and example, such an arrangement is in itself most desirable, for two can help each other in sickness and bodily danger, and are at other times a mutual safeguard against various temptations. This plan I have seen adopted in various missions during my own experience. But

never have I seen it carried out for any length of time ; something or other has always happened, removing the one and leaving the other to labour alone. It was my misfortune to be alone from the beginning, as ill health prevented my senior from accompanying me to the site of the projected mission.

Certainly it was not a "Garden of Eden," unless half an acre of land, cleared, but swampy, and at times inundated, with dense forest on three sides and a good-sized river on the fourth, could be considered such. A gang of negro slaves, wood-cutters, had lived there and left three old huts, one of which they had used as a blacksmith's forge. That I occupied. Another hut was still inhabited by an old African woman, who received me with many smiles and curtsies, and on her hospitable charity I was, for more than a year, utterly dependent.

Elsewhere I have mentioned her great kindness, but not fully. I do so now, because in declining years it is pleasant to recall such things, and also in the hope that others, young as I then was, may in times of difficulty and discouragement be led to trust in Him who can smooth the way by unexpected aid.

Seeing me set ashore on the river's bank, with only a clothes-chest, carpet-bag, and hammock, old Jeannette set to work to furnish my hut from her own. A table (minus one leg, and placed against the wall), a small form, and a queer-looking chair were soon brought. For a hand-basin she brought an Indian jar (ornamented with a Caribbean pattern),

which answered its purpose all the better through the upper part having been broken off all round. She supplied my table from her own—chiefly the common negro soup, of plantains and salt-fish, with a slice of coarse-grained North American salt pork as an occasional luxury,—and seeing that I could not without loathing eat this black broth continually, she set the two black children she had with her to catch little fishes in the river and drains, which, though not very fine, were fresh and more wholesome eating. Very rarely a black man brought a piece of vension, or of the delicious labba (or paca) from the forest, which always found its way from her table to mine.

That this kindness did not spring from any expectation of reward I had full proof when a stranger one day stopped his boat and handed me a remittance, of which I had been for several months in great need. He looked at the swampy land, shook his head ominously, and went on his way. As soon as he was gone I proceeded to settle with Jeannette; but for a long time she would take nothing, saying that it was "more than payment to have a religious teacher for her guest." At last I prevailed with her to take the value of the food I had eaten, but for her domestic services she would take nothing. And only when I told her that I must then look out for another "old body" would she consent to receive payment in future.

Of the devotion of the African negro to his master, and to the family of which he considered

himself a part, I had read, and have seen a few instances. But I was nothing to this old woman and her family, who had never seen or heard of me until the day I was set ashore among them.

Their unexpected kindness was a consolation amidst other disappointments; for the Indians, to whom I had been especially sent, were either indifferent or contemptuous. Their sorcerers had denounced Christianity, which was in itself sufficient. But they could also see, as they paddled by, that I was dwelling in a hut of most shabby materials—old boards, rough and rotting, the split trunks of the manicole palm, and the leaves of the troolie. They knew, or thought they knew, what a white man's residence ought to be; for were there not two whites, woodcutters, residing on the banks of the river? One of these, who lived within view, had a good shingled house, with a verandah painted white and green. The house of the other was not, indeed, painted nor shingled, but it had decent furniture, including a most mysterious and wonderful Dutch clock, on the top of which stood three little trumpeters who put their instruments to their wooden mouths and seemed to produce music whenever the clock struck the hour. Indians came from far to witness this magical event, and would squat (though at a safe distance, and in some degree of awe) awaiting the concert; and then spring to their feet with shouts of wonder and surprise when they saw and heard it. I had, of course, nothing to compete with those attractions. The

one or two Arawâks who had ventured to visit my dwelling could only report that I had nothing in it worth looking at, and "not even a dram of rum to give them."

Jeannette, knowing these discouragements, did her best in her way of consolation, enforcing her arguments with those exaggerated gestures which her demonstrative race, the females especially, are accustomed to use. "What matter if Indians" (whom she called by their Creole-Dutch titles, *Bucks* and *Buckeens*) "would not come, nor send their children to school? She would furnish scholars herself. Were there not Johnny, her godson, and Eve, her daughter—had I not already begun with them? She would soon get more." So she went paddling herself about the river to the few settlements of the black people, and got two or three little "Creoles," who filled her abode to overflowing.

All these, except the girl Eve, were unclad. I gave the big boy a shirt, but the smaller fry I could not assist. However, the old woman dressed them, —scantily indeed, but somehow. Boy No. 2 was rigged out in a blue striped coatee, which, as he was very rotund (from the depraved habit, engendered by disease, of eating clay or earth), could not be made to button by some inches. He would have looked in my eyes better with nothing on, and been much more comfortable. But tastes differ. Garments which would not cover were still garments, and, as such, considered respectable by the river people. It would not do to be too fastidious

—to raise people we must first take them as they are. So, with these as boarders (at Jeannette's expense), and two or three day scholars from over the river, the school was fairly started. But the Indians, seeing the little blacks, had, from the long-standing animosity between the races, an additional objection to placing their children there.

There being at that time no hope of removal to a better site, I set to work to enclose a small garden, to raise a few vegetables and flowers. All the family worked willingly, and Jeannette distinguished herself by her energy in getting sweet potato and yam plants, coffee, plantain suckers, etc., and in showing me how to plant them. But the soil was too stiff, the yams yielded little, and the coffee would not grow. Bananas, however, flourished, the tall "miniginee" especially; and many years after the settlement had been abandoned I could see them, as I passed by on the river, lifting their broad leaves in clumps through the wild, fast-growing bush, doomed to perish in its embrace, but still battling stoutly for existence.

Our agricultural pursuits were varied by the killing of bush scorpions and centipedes, the latter often eight or nine inches in length. Occasionally an opossum, or other small animal, would come across us, which was the signal for a great outcry and general chase.

I wondered then, and still wonder, at the hardihood of the women and children of the settlers on those rivers, who remain, sometimes for weeks

together, without a man to protect them. Here I had found a feeble woman and two children, in a spot where the *jaguar*, *ocelot*, *puma*, and *tiger-cat* were often heard and sometimes seen; where the venomous *labária* snake abounded, and where the formidable *camùdi*, or water-boa, was frequently found lurking in the drains or amongst the long reeds and water grass. These latter are from eight to twenty-two feet in length, and seem ready to attack ànything—fowls, dogs, goats, or human beings. Nor do they hesitate, when hungry, to spring upon the mail-clad alligator himself, coming behind him stealthily, as he lies in the water watching the bank for prey.

There was much to interest a stranger in studying the habits of those wild denizens of the forests and swamps, as well as those of the river negroes, who were then scarcely less wild.

And so the days passed away at Jeannette's settlement. From the time I landed there had been prayers morning and evening, which every one attended, whether residents or strangers.

Occasionally we had the black crews of the small colony schooners and sloops, which came to the river for hard-wood timber or the leaves of the troolie palm. Negroes generally sing well, and it was pleasant to hear at night, in a clear moonshine, the tenor voices of the rowers who were towing their vessels up the stream; and, as the song became more audible, to see the tall masts, with dark drooping sails, move slowly round the nearest

point and approach our shore. For, though Indians shunned the spot, it was for the black boatmen a regular place of call.

When any of them spoke to me it was, of course, in the negro English; but among themselves they used the Creole-Dutch. By degrees I began to understand something of their talk, which was not edifying. Among the Creoles of the river marriage was, I found, at that time unknown.

A tropical sun overhead and swampy land all around will have their natural effect upon the human frame. No constitution, however healthy, that is fresh from the temperate zone, can long resist their influence. Sooner or later fever comes. A general lassitude and a not unpleasant sensation of drowsiness usually hang over you for a day or two before it sets in violently. These are premonitory symptoms. An experienced hand knows that it is time to take medicine, and does so; a novice goes on as usual.

Generally in the night the severe attack comes on. Thirst, violent pains all over, especially in the back, intense agony in the head, ideas crowding and whirling with inconceivable rapidity through the brain, and sometimes delirium—these indicate the crisis you have to go through.

The young negroes made a great outcry at finding me one morning, in this state, on the rough damp floor, having tossed myself out of the hammock. Jeannette came, and in a moment set me down as another victim to yellow fever, which she

had seen destroy many young Europeans. There was no doctor to be got, so she resolved to administer what she called a "puke" of emetic tartar, the only medicine she had. Determined to cure, she administered a dose so large that it nearly killed her patient. I have a faint remembrance of swooning between a tub and a huge jug of warm water (while the young Creoles looked on admiringly at her practice of physic), and of hearing the old woman's lamentation turning into joy as I revived to consciousness again.

The fever was for a time checked by this severe treatment, but it soon returned. It was the commencement of a "seasoning," which lasted eleven months. Three times during that period I was carried away from the spot to save my life, after very severe attacks, the worst of which was checked by an old Barbadian lady on the coast, who gave me, with much mystery, what proved to be two *cobweb* pills. Their effect was wonderful. Pain at once gave way to soft and refreshing sleep. But I never dared to repeat the dose on my own account, for there are many different spiders in Guiana—some much dreaded—and I did not know the kind whose web she had used.

No mother could nurse her child more tenderly than old Jeannette nursed me. One instance of her care struck me more than all. I had only a few books, and she knew that I had read them over many times. So, without telling me, she went in her canoe ten miles to a settler's house to see if

she could borrow a book to amuse me, and succeeded. Nothing could have been more suitable; for it was Mungo Park's account of his first expedition. The feelings of that traveller, when aided by the negro woman in his distress, are easily understood and shared, when from one of the same race you are receiving like disinterested kindness.

Jeannette might herself have seen Park, for she had been born on the banks of the Gambia, and was kidnapped there (as I found by questioning her) soon after his first expedition. Another young girl, who was probably a decoy, had said to her, "Let us go down to the shore where I have seen beautiful shells." So she went, and was seized by two black men, who were there lying in wait, and sold to a slaver captain, who brought her to Demerara. Her life since then had been that of a house slave, not of a field labourer, until the emancipation, when she came and settled on the spot where I had found her.

At length, after a weary period of disappointment, and rejection of the Gospel by the red men, a ray of light appeared. Sacibarra (or Cornelius), an Arawâk, came to ask for instruction in the religion of Jesus Christ. He at first came alone; but, after a time, a few others followed him. The coming in of these Indians was heartily welcomed by Jeannette, whose services then became invaluable in looking after their children.

But the time at length came when I was to lose Jeannette. She had frequently heard the duty of

Christian marriage inculcated on our neighbours. One day she came and told me that "one of the black men, who sometimes came to the mission, was to be married as soon as a clergyman came to the river." I was, of course, glad to hear it, and asked the name of the bride-elect. After some hesitation, she said that it was *herself*.

This was grievous. For, though there was no disparity of years, I knew that the man did not bear a good character. The name given him when young, he had told me, was "Nobody," but, being now well on in life, people showed respect for his years by leaving out the first syllable. And being a senior, he was generally called *Uncle* as well; and became "Uncle 'Body," according to the negro custom.

All arguments and warnings were in vain; the man professed to be a converted character, and it was settled. Soon all around us were in high excitement, talking of the marriage to take place between "Uncle" 'Body and "Aunty" Jeannette; and it took place accordingly. An enormously large white satin bonnet (of the period) with a lace veil, the gift of a former mistress, disfigured the bride.

Sad and short is the rest of her story. "Uncle 'Body" (whose pretended conversion was but short-lived) had doubtless married her to get possession of her little property—the money which, like all respectable, well-conducted slaves, she had managed to save. He soon began to treat her so badly

that I had to interfere to protect her from his cruelty. He then took her away to the settlement on the opposite side of the river, where he could be as brutal as he liked.

About nine o'clock one Sunday evening I was sitting in the new thatched house, which during my sickness had been built for me, when I thought I heard the sound of blows, and cries for aid, coming across the still water. Fearing some evil I went out, and saw my Indians, who had been roused from their hammocks by the same noise, and were anxiously listening on the bank of the river. We were all uneasy, but the sounds had ceased, and were not repeated.

The next morning I heard that Jeannette had been beaten by her husband with a squared stick, and was lying in a dangerous state. I visited her, found it too true; read and prayed with her. She was quiet and resigned, making no complaint, but she had received severe bodily injury, and her heart was broken. She was evidently thinking of the mission, to which she had been, in her degree, a nursing mother, and where she might have lived yet many years as a sort of queen among the Indians, who loved her, and were grateful for her care of their children.

Soon after I had the grief to see my old friend wave her hand feebly, in a final adieu, from the boat in which she was being carried to the coast for medical aid.

It could not save her. She lingered for some

time, and then died, and was buried in the ground attached to the chapel of St. Saviour, in Trinity parish. In after years, when rector of that parish, I tried to find her grave, that I might place over it some little memorial; but none could point it out to me.

The inroads of the sea have since compelled us to remove that chapel to another site, and have washed away part of the burial-ground. May it long spare the remaining portion, in which still rest the bones of my kind old benefactress, African Jeannette.

## II.

## CANOE WORK.

Meeting with Mr. Youd—Learning to paddle—Fragile craft—River scenery—Crossing the sea—Venezuelan half-breeds—Various adventures—"Drift-mud"—Accidents to others.

IN visiting England some years ago in quest of health, I found that the song then most popular with the multitude was "Paddle your own canoe." The words, or the lively air to which they are set, might be heard everywhere, as they were sung or whistled by street Arabs, and played by German bands.

To me they had a peculiar interest, recalling the experiences of days long past.

My ideas respecting a canoe, and the way to paddle it, had been rather hazy until I landed in Georgetown, in the early part of the year 1840. I knew that Robinson Crusoe's canoes, both the large and the small, had only existed in the imagination of Defoe, yet that such primitive vessels were really to be found on rivers and seas, and largely used by savage nations. I understood that the South Sea Islanders had canoes of large size, made of hollowed trees and beautifully carved, while some of the North American Indians formed theirs of bark. But of the shape and materials of those used by the aborigines of Guiana I knew nothing until I unexpectedly found myself surrounded by them.

A large specimen, with blunt head and stern (the *canoe* proper of the river people), was dancing over the troubled waves of the Demerara, being propelled by some eight or ten lusty, wild-looking Caribs, and approaching the wharf, or "stelling," on which we had landed; while around the landing steps below lay a little flotilla of smaller ones, each with sharp-pointed bow and stern. These are called *corials*, from "coriala," their Indian name. They were so narrow and crank, and looked so dangerous as they tossed about, with Indians squatting in, or getting in and out of them, that I could not help saying, as I looked at them, "I shall never be able to travel in such as these."

The friends who had welcomed our landing told

me I should find no other craft to travel in among the aborigines, adding that, with care and practice, there was "not so much danger as there seemed to be."

One of those friends was a clergyman, young in years, but a veteran as regarded his work. He had undergone every "bush" experience; had established a Mission of the Church in the far distant interior, and gathered around him the proud Carib and the industrious Macusi. He had killed with a cutlass one of the largest water-boas ever known, which had entered his canoe and frightened his Indian paddlers into the water. It was the Rev. Mr. Youd, a man of whom the Church Missionary Society may be justly proud, though in Demerara his labours, having been crushed out, are now almost forgotten. It was then the crisis of his missionary career. Driven successively by Brazilian bayonets from the stations he had planted at Pirara and Urwa Rapids, he, with the Macusi and Carib Indians I saw around him, had just come down the Essequibo,—a fugitive flock, seeking British protection.

I have ever thought it a privilege to have met at such a time a man who, in the fulfilment of the Master's great command, had suffered the loss of all. For he had then lost home, children, and wife —the latter from poison administered by an old Indian sorcerer. He himself, having partaken of the same poisoned food, died at sea, a year or two after I had seen him, from the lingering effects of

it, aided by sorrow at the destruction of his arduous and once most promising work.[1]

Not many weeks after parting with that devoted man I found myself obliged to use a very little corial, one quite as crank and dangerous as any of those which had belonged to his wild-looking people. For there was no other way of moving one hundred yards from the place in which I was then located than by the river, and no other conveyance than that small craft, which a woodcutter on the banks of the Pomeroon had lent me.

Daily, and almost hourly, Indians with copper-coloured skins gleaming in the sunlight were moving up and down the river in their little barks, but mostly taking care to pass by on the other side. To communicate with them it was necessary to do as they did, and "paddle my own canoe."

Those who have seen the graceful motion and easy play of muscle with which an Indian at once propels and guides his little craft, may think it a trifling thing to do. But, like every other accomlishment, it requires practice. There is a knack of gently striking the handle of the paddle on the side of the corial, which eases the weight and causes it to spring up for the next stroke, and this, which seems the most easy, is indeed the most difficult part to the uninitiated. Most Europeans, in at-

[1] An excellent memoir of the career of this enterprising missionary was published a few years ago by the S.P.C.K. It is entitled "Ten Years of Mission Life in British Guiana," and is the work of a fellow-labourer, the Rev. T. Veness.

tempting it, bruise severely the knuckles of that hand which grasps the paddle just above the blade.

And if the amateur be too ambitious, and attempt to *steer* before he has had some experience in paddling, his course will assuredly be more eccentric than satisfactory. He will find his light bark describing every variety of curve and angle on the water, and responding to his desperate efforts to correct her deviations on one side by turning sharply round on the other, and pointing her head back again. For, being very light, and without keel, the slightest impulse turns her round as on a pivot.

Such at any rate was my experience. I should probably have finished my first canoe voyage by a capsize, or by drifting ignominiously down the river, had it not been for the aid of the black boy —my "butler," as he called himself—the only male inhabitant I had found on the place. He had been charged by Jeannette to "mind massa good," and he did so,—criticizing "massa" at the same time. Well do I remember how he glanced from time to time over his shoulder, very comically—for nature had given him a prodigious squint, and he was bursting with suppressed glee at my awkwardness, and our amazingly eccentric course. At last I had to give in, and beg him to change places. The craft was so narrow that I doubted if we could pass each other without accident, but he settled the matter by merely turning his naked legs towards me; sitting in the bow to steer, the head and stern

being both alike. With a few vigorous and skilful strokes he brought us back to shore, not a little delighted to find himself acknowledged captain.

But necessity and practice are good teachers, and by the time black Johnny ran away (which he did from sheer disgust at having to learn the English alphabet, and seeing monosyllables looming beyond it), I had learned to paddle and steer fairly. The steady skill with which the crouching Indian balances himself and his ticklish craft was more difficult to acquire, but that also came by degrees. The heat of the climate, however, was very great, and occasioned much exhaustion.

The old woman and the little negroes and mulattoes who formed her household sometimes acted as a crew. That motley group and myself steering behind, with a handkerchief at the back of my head to keep the sun's rays from blistering my neck (puggerees being then unknown there), would not have been a bad subject for a caricature.

Our most difficult exploit in those days was the bringing a milch goat from the place where we had been able to purchase it, a distance of eight or ten miles. For "Nannie" would not "gang wi' me" at all, nor enter the crank canoe. The whole crew of little negroes had to coax, pull, hoist in front, and push behind to get her into it. Once in, her head was tied low, to keep her from jumping out again. She, however, bleated and struggled, throwing herself from side to side in such a manner as nearly to capsize us. After a mile or two of this absurd

peril I allowed her to stand up. Being a sensible old goat, she no sooner saw water all around than she became a perfectly quiet passenger, and was landed in triumph,—a valuable addition to our little colony.

Another year passed—Cornelius had joined us—and there was a great change in that desolate spot. Indian houses were being erected there, and it resounded with the merry laughter of copper-coloured children, bathing or at play. From them I selected a crew of three stout lads, Barnwell, "young" Cornelius, and David, who could paddle me anywhere about the river. Their help came at a time when a "seasoning" of colony fever had permanently weakened me.

We went in different directions every week, as my strength permitted, until we had gone through all the settlements of their own—the Arawâk—nation, and also those of the Caribs, who dwell nearer the head of the river. By that time my youthful crew had more than doubled its number, and we made good speed.

The scenery of the upper Pomeroon is very beautiful. It meanders through what is called the "Caribi country;" running swiftly between high banks, which are covered with the *Mora excelsa* and other fine timber trees; their magnificent and variegated foliage, interspersed with flowering vines and orchideous plants, overshadowing the stream. Lower down the river the land is flat and marshy for nearly fifty miles, and abounds in manicole and trooli-

palms. The scenery is much tamer, and towards the mouth there is no other forest to be seen than that which consists of wild mangroves, extending in unbroken lines on either side. The waters of the river, which in the upper part are of a clear rich brown, and mirror every object distinctly, become, near the mouth, as yellow as those of Father Tiber himself.

On either side, but at considerable distance from the river, are extensive lakes, not very healthy to live near, but picturesque, from the grand forest which clothes the hills around, and the clusters of ita, or mauritia, palms, which spring from their marshy borders and adorn their islands.

The voyager on those waters "unknown to song" will, if a stranger, see many things to amuse or interest him. What especially struck me was the fact that snakes of various species—some very small—are so frequently met swimming over the wide stream; evidently *land* snakes, as they hurry on without diving if you approach them. You may sometimes also, though rarely, get a sight of the great camudi, or water-boa, on or near the bank.

Overhead fly parrots and macaws of different species, with loud cries, going to or returning from their feeding grounds. Kingfishers and other bright birds flit along the upper streams; and lower down, though you have entered the less pleasing region of mud, you still see birds of beauty—handsame ducks, tempting to the sportsman; the snow-

white heron or gawling, and the scarlet curry-curry. Flights of these latter, and of flamingoes, will cross your path in long, red, wavy lines, near the sea-shore.

Land animals are sometimes seen swimming across the river; the "quiarra" or bush-deer frequently, the jaguar and the ant-bear more rarely, may be met while doing so. Peccaries, or bush-hogs, will also, in their migrations, take the water, a large herd crossing in a line after their leader. The larger species of these, the fierce "kaironies," will, if molested, fight as readily in the water as on land. Should you meet them thus swimming over, see that the sides of your boat are high enough to defy *boarders* ere you attempt to break their line.

Amphibious creatures will frequently attract your notice. The alligator, lying near the bank, submerges his cruel-looking head as you pass by. In the early morning otters will be met gambolling in small packs; they dive as you approach, then rise, and impudently follow when you have passed them. And on rare occasions, near the sea, you may observe the huge back of some amphibious animal heave slowly above the water, and then sink down again. It is the manati, or water-cow, which has come to the surface to breathe.

The monotony of our voyages was sometimes broken by my Indians, in the still water at the turn of the tide, shooting at some large fish, as the lau-lau, with bow and arrow. If successful, the barbed head of the arrow remained in the wound, while

the reedy shaft, attached to it by a string, would be seen describing strange figures on the surface, and showing the track of the fish beneath. The Indians follow this until the fish becomes exhausted, or an opportunity is given of shooting another arrow into it, which generally proves fatal.

Sometimes we were compelled, by the strong opposing tide, to wait for hours in a place where, owing to inundations, there was no dry land to step upon. Some shady spot would be selected, and the canoe tied to the overhanging branches. My lads, ever docile and obedient, would then get their books, and a little school be kept in the canoe.

Those were happy days, notwithstanding privations, and the remembrance of them is sweet. It is even hallowed in some degree by the reflection that all, save one, of those who then used to paddle me on my missionary expeditions, have gone before into the other world.

We had, of course, discomfort enough from the burning sun, and from the heavy rains of the wet season. Such rain as falls on those tropical rivers! —furious, unrelenting, and so thick and heavy that every object not close to you is hidden from sight by it. To sit upon a bench was simply to sit in water. I found that the only way in those deluges was to place myself on a small box, arrange my cloak, and let it hang loosely all around, so as to carry the water down at once, holding at the same time an umbrella close over my head. In that style you look something like a huge mushroom,

but manage to escape a good deal of wet. In the most violent rains, however, all such defences are inadequate to save you from a soaking.

My lads adopted a very different method. They had no umbrellas, and could not have used their paddles if they had. So they would take off their shirts, put them carefully up in their pegalls (or covered waterproof baskets), and let the rain beat on their naked bodies. They said it was not half so bad as to sit in a wet garment. They generally pulled with all their might to keep themselves warm during the fury of the rain, and when it cleared away put on their dry garments and made themselves comfortable.

Sometimes, in those rain-storms, we would meet other Indians in their little corials scudding along and caring little for weather if wind and tide were with them. A few leaves of the troolie palm, held by the mothers over themselves and children, were their umbrellas ; and one or two long ones would be held up to catch the wind and serve as a sail.

Such is open canoe travelling in Guiana during the wet season, when you have torrents of rain for days together, with frequent thunder and lightning.

In the dry season the heat is of course severe while the sun is high ; but heavy dew, and often thick mists, prevail from evening until morning. As the sun gets low the breeze dies away, and you see the vapour settling on the water, and spreading everywhere. Frequently in embarking (to save tide) about three in the morning, we would see the

mist gliding over the river in large masses, conveying, as we passed through them, the idea of the smoke of cannon and musketry in some fierce engagement. This is pretty enough in the moonlight, but very chilly and prejudicial to health, especially if you, having had much previous fatigue, become drowsy and fall asleep in the damp and noxious vapour.

During those voyages we had a somewhat larger craft than that in which I had served apprenticeship. I had purchased a "buck" (*i.e.* Indian) "shell." That is the name given to the corial, or canoe, as it comes from its Indian maker, who has hollowed and shaped it from the trunk of a tree, and opened it by putting fire beneath and water inside. The latter is a most delicate and critical operation, which often splits and ruins the work as it is being finished.

My "shell" was about thirty feet long, with sides not more than two hands-breadth above the surface of the water. Being without timbers, or strengthening work of any kind, it was very light and swift, but liable to be split by the action of the sun, or shattered by a violent concussion. It was not without considerable apprehension that I first ventured in her over the five miles of sea which lie between the mouths of the Pomeroon and Moruca.

It was necessary to go, for the Gospel is to be preached to *all;* and the work had, by that time spread thus far.

On our first attempt to make the voyage in this

"shell" we were met by a heavy squall, ending in downright torrents of rain, which certainly beat the sea quite smooth, but at the same time hid the shore from view, and threatened to swamp us. At length we got upon the mud flat, where we could not sink, and baled the craft clear of water. The rain passed off, but so thick was the air, that for some time the only visible object was a cormorant, sitting near us on a stick, which some Warau fisherman had planted there to attach his hooks to. The bird looked as woe-begone as ourselves, though he was probably quite comfortable in his water-proof plumage, digesting his fishy breakfast.

As the weather became clear we passed on over a perfectly smooth sea. The fine fish called "querrima" were leaping up in every direction. Something slowly moving nearer the shore attracted the attention of my crew, and as we pulled towards it, we saw that it was the dorsal fin of a *shark.*

The fish seemed quite a small one and hampered in the shallows, so that my boys (who, living up a river, were not much acquainted with sharks) hoped to drive it ashore. But instead of going on before in a timid and docile manner, it turned and came towards us at full speed, making a spring out of the muddy water directly at the head of our frail bark, and lashing out its tail. Our steersman swinging us swiftly round to avoid it, the shark, which was by no means a small one, came with a terrific splash beneath our bow, and we next saw the fin, which had attracted us, wriggling swiftly along the

surface outside until it sunk down in deep water. The fish was evidently alarmed—but so were we, our bowman especially looking as pale as a red-skin can. He and his comrades evidently felt that it would not do to chase sharks on a mud-flat in so frail a vessel, and I fully agreed with them. Indeed, if our craft had been heavily struck, it would probably have split open, and placed us all in the water at the fish's mercy.

Our next adventure was at the mouth of the Moruca, which had then a sandy shore. We heard, as we approached, the firing of guns, with loud shouts and laughter.

Some Venezuelan half-breeds had emptied a bottle of rum, placed it on a stick for a target, and were firing at it—their shots flying across the narrow mouth of the river. They were very drunk and noisy, and my boys feared to pass the line of fire of such reckless fellows, lest they should let fly at us. Though too tipsy to hit the bottle, they might have managed to shoot a man. So it was agreed that I should land some distance off, and attract their attention for a time, while the swift craft slipped past with noiseless paddles and entered the thick forest at the mouth of the river. This was done. The Venezuelans—one of whom, as we afterwards heard, had just fled from Angostura for murder—gave me an unexpectedly warm reception, dropping on their knees (to my no small annoyance), seizing my hand, and saluting it with maudlin kisses. Seeing my black dress and

well-tanned face, they had mistaken me for one of their own priests. On the whole it was not a very pleasant incident, but as we went on our way up the Moruca, and heard the noise of their shots and wild shouts dying away in the distance, we felt that it might have ended worse.

Though low and frail, the little craft was so light and swift, and did our work so well, that I was unwilling to give her up. It was, however, desirable to secure more comfort in her, if possible. A strip of canvas fixed above each side, in the middle or lowest part, kept out the wash of the bow-paddles, and answered very well. To protect my head from the fierce rays of the vertical sun, which long-continued fever had rendered me unable to bear, my boys made a roof of troolie thatch, but that had to be fixed on so firmly that if the wind had caught it and laid us even slightly over, there could be no escape from drowning. So that was taken off again. The next plan was to get four slender uprights supporting a light frame covered with canvas, which was tied on with twine that would snap, or be easily broken, in any emergency. That answered very well during several voyages. But one fine afternoon it went away unexpectedly. The sunlight suddenly came upon the book I was reading; my crew gave a cry of half-alarm, half-merriment, and I saw my light tent-cover spinning round and round through the air, and falling into the water some distance off. One of those whirling puffs of wind which may sometimes be seen on

those coasts, spinning along over the sea, and dashing the tops of the little waves into spray, had come down on the river and taken away the tent; doing us, however, no further harm. I never met with a similar incident.

But the time had now come when the necessity which had at first existed for our travelling in such frail and open craft would cease. Dr. Austin, formerly Archdeacon of Guiana, had, in 1842, been consecrated its first bishop, and became the nursing father of our missions in things temporal as well as spiritual. Under his auspices, and by the aid of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, we obtained a new, elevated, and consequently more healthy site for our Pomeroon Mission. A separate station, rendered necessary by the spread of our work, was also founded on the Moruca, in the Warau country, beside the (then) mysterious tumulus which stands on the hill of Waramuri. Of this my brother, the Rev. J. H. Nowers, was the first resident missionary.

Each station had a new and substantial tent-boat, and their respective teachers had now numbers of Indians around them; so neither was compelled, as a matter of necessity, to "paddle his own canoe."

Yet in those larger boats, fitted with tents to keep off sun and rain, greater risks were undergone than I ever experienced in the little "buck-shell."

In the Waramuri boat Mr. Nowers and myself were caught by a sudden and violent storm on the sea. He with a bucket and an Indian with a large

calabash were hard at work, baling incessantly to keep us from sinking, as the surf washed over our bows; six men were pulling for their lives to keep us off shore and head to wind, while I had to cut away the tent, which was drifting us back by receiving the fury of the gale. For an hour and a half we were in this jeopardy, and were very thankful when the storm ceased, which it did suddenly, as it had begun.

Soon after this my brother and his family returned to England, in broken health. I had also been carried from the mission for the sixth time, and was compelled to reside on the Aruabisi coast, being allowed to visit the rivers periodically, but forbidden by the doctors to live there. In those voyages the Indians paddled me, as before.

Once or twice since then we have nearly met with serious accidents on the sea. The heavy rollers on one occasion dashed our canoe against some old piles of timber, which broke in her side like an eggshell, causing her to fill with water as we jumped ashore. At another time our tent was shattered by a blow from a heavy sea, and ere we could clear away the wreck we were nearly overturned.

But between those accidents the long period of twenty-four years passed, without serious risk or adventure. We sometimes got upon "snags;" sometimes ran in the night upon floating timbers, and often found the courses of the smaller streams blocked up by fallen trees, which required much cutting and chopping with cutlass and axe. Some-

times also trees, decayed, or undermined by the current, fell nearly upon us; but these are only the ordinary difficulties of river travelling.

The passage over the sea between the Pomeroon and Moruca was the only dangerous part of my regular work, and experience had taught that the safest time to attempt it was just before low water at the spring tides. The sea is then at its lowest, and a long bank or bar, some miles out, checks the sweeping waves of the Atlantic, and for an hour or two renders the estuary comparatively smooth.

But in the year 1871 a large bank of "drift-mud" floated in, and located itself across the channel leading into the Moruca. Not knowing this, we got aground on it one evening just about dusk. The water took itself off so rapidly that my Indian hands (eight fine young men of various tribes) stripped off their clothes and struggled through the mud to push the boat over; but all was in vain—mud seemed to rise above water all around us, and by eight o'clock there was no sea within a mile or two in either direction. The young men were, of course, covered with wet mud from head to foot, and there was not even a puddle to wash in. Some got into the boat, and commenced scraping each other with knives and a cutlass, to get off the worst of it; and then they huddled on their garments, for a cold wind, the precursor of a squall, was blowing in from the sea. By degrees all were in the boat and dressed, save one. That one insisted on remaining outside, buried up to his

shoulders in the mud, and holding on with one hand, to keep himself from going down altogether. He declared that it was "too cold to get out." At last, when I served out rations to the rest, and told him that he should have none while he remained there in wet mud, like an "orehu," or *water-mama* (the Indian mermaid), he clambered on board, and was duly scraped like his comrades.

A heavy shower then fell and drove them all, with the strong odour of the drift-mud still on them, into the tent, where we were crowded on each other. Then it cleared up, and the stars came out brilliantly. Midnight came and passed, and as we watched Orion rise in beauty above the ocean, followed by Sirius, Canopus, and others, a slight murmur was heard, and the dark bank on which we lay seemed to sink gently into the sea. It was the next tide, which had quietly worked in all around us, and was soon lapping against our sides, and carrying us, nothing loth, on our way.[1]

The above are a few of my own experiences in canoe-work on river and sea. Other missionaries to our aborigines have undergone greater risks on the rivers, especially in ascending and descending

[1] Fishermen, who are often left by the tide as we were on those banks of mud, report strange noises as made by huge saw-fishes, who are left in hollows and struggling to get into deeper water. Huge specimens of that formidable fish are there met with. Some have been found twenty-five feet in length. When molested, one of these has been known to dash a canoe in pieces with the terrible toothed "saw" which grows from its snout.

the rapids which obstruct most of our finest streams. Those on the Essequibo and its tributaries are most formidable at certain seasons. Whole families, even of Indians, are at times drowned in that dangerous navigation.

It was at one of those Essequibo rapids that the Rev. Mr. Pollitt nearly lost his life. His crew were attempting to ascend it at night while he was sleeping. The canoe overturned and was carried down the swift current. As the Indians are almost amphibious, they swam after it, and, after much time and labour, brought it to the bank, emptied it of water, and paddled it up again to the scene of the accident. During all that time the unfortunate missionary was clinging to a small bush which grew in a cleft of the rock, his body swaying to and fro with the current, and his hands, with which he was holding on for life, terribly bitten by ants, which had a nest there. The darkness, the uncertainty of rescue, and the knowledge that those rapids are the favourite haunts of the cayman, which waits and watches for what they bring down, must have rendered his situation a very terrible one.

The consequences of this accident were severe illness, which compelled his return to England, and the eventual abandonment of the mission at Waraputa, the *last* station founded by the unfortunate but indefatigable Mr. Youd.

As all communications with the interior of the country are necessarily by water, it is only by boat or canoe that our various mission stations can be

reached; there is, consequently, continual water-travelling for all engaged in the work. The resident teachers must leave the forest sometimes for supplies and necessary change; the superintending clergyman must go his rounds regularly, and either the bishop or archdeacon when on visitation. Unpleasant, dangerous, or fatal accidents do happen sometimes.

Two catechists, both serving with me, have been unfortunately drowned; one a teacher in the lower district of the Pomeroon,—the other, Tien-tsan, a zealous young Chinese, labouring in my parish and along the Araubisi coast among his immigrant brethren. The waters and sharks of the Demerara, by a strange coincidence, destroyed both. The former fell overboard from a sloop off Georgetown in 1869, and the other was drowned in 1872 by the sinking of a canoe, which, running down the river with a swift current, amidst rain and darkness, dashed against a heavily laden timber-punt near the city, and went under. His Christian countrymen, deeply grieving, strove to recover the body of their lost teacher, but in vain. The waters of the Demerara mouth seldom give up those who are once submerged in them.

While those who have been for many years spared from any fatal accident have cause for deep thankfulness to Almighty God, they have also need to "watch and pray," as the Saviour commands, that they may be always "ready." For no man knoweth what a day may bring forth.

## III.

## THROUGH THE WOODS.

**Forests and forest paths—Caribs and Carib villages—Various journeys—Female burden-bearers—Primitive bridges—Reptiles and quadrupeds—A night-watch.**

THE coast-line of Guiana is low and flat, with scarcely any elevation, save in Cayenne. The wild mangrove and courida trees cover the muddy shore. As you sail along the cultivated region you see the tall chimneys of the sugar estates rising above them, but when you have passed these all is desolate. One or two small canoes, with Warau fishermen, may perhaps meet your eye, or a smoke on the shore may show you where Indians are catching crabs. If your telescope be a good one you may see them,—pallid and ghastly objects, for they have plastered their bodies with mud from head to foot to keep off mosquitoes.

Behind this edge of mangrove swamp, sand-reefs (as they are called) of small elevation run in most places parallel with the line of coast. On these, and beyond them, grow the magnificent forests,

which, broken in many places by "wet" or "dry" savannahs, and intersected by rivers of all sizes form the distinguishing features of Guiana.

Of those grand forests much has been written and in various languages. Humboldt, Waterton, Schomburgk, and others have described their exuberant vegetation; from the carpet of leaves, moss, and ferns on which you tread, to the giant timber-trees whose leafy crowns are spread like bright green clouds above all. They have told of the lianas which cling to and climb their trunks, interlace their wide-spreading branches, and having reached the summit descend again, like the cordage of a ship. They have also described that other great feature of tropical vegetation—the clustering palm trees—various in their kinds—"of all vegetable forms the most grand and beautiful, which wave their pinion-like leaves in the soft breeze."

If you are a stranger and would not be lost in these boundless woods, do not rashly quit the narrow Indian paths, nor even wander far along them without a guide; for, as the late Canon Kingsley well observed in his admirable description of the "High Woods" of Trinidad, "without compass, or the landmark of some opening to which he can look, a man must be lost in the first ten minutes, such *sameness* is there in the *infinite variety*." But if you are sure of your locality, and not beyond reach of help in case of sudden danger, it will do you no harm to wander among the tall trees, observe their magnificence, and study the

habits of the living creatures which swarm upon and around them.

The Indians and others who from childhood have roamed these woods in quest of game, probably feel but little of the *awe* with which they strike their European visitor. That awe arises from their immensity, with which he has not yet become familiar, and from the knowledge that strange and deadly creatures are to be met within them. A feeling of wonder also arises from the unaccustomed sounds which reach your ears; for at certain hours you are quite bewildered by the incessant whirring and chirping of insects, and the notes of the birds, some cheerful and merry, though shrill, while others, though proceeding from those of gayest plumage, are discordant. Then comes a time when these are mostly hushed, and a general calmness reigns around, scarcely broken by the sighing of the wind high overhead, the call of the wood-pigeon, or the distant tolling of the bell-bird. At times a startling crash is heard, following by an echoing roar like distant thunder; you listen to the reverberations and know that some grand old giant of the woods has fallen.

A person of ordinary intelligence can hardly, I think, stand alone in those forests without a feeling of religious veneration—you are so entirely away from the bustling world, and feel so small amidst the innumerable stately objects around you. And the efforts which they all seem making to raise their heads into the light and glory of the sun and

sky above them, seem to invite you to lift your soul heavenward, and adore the Great Father in that many-pillared cathedral which His hand hath reared.

The rapid step, with which, in forest marches, you have to keep up with your Indian guide, is not, I admit, very favourable to thoughts and feelings like these. But when a halt is made and you pause to observe the scene around, they will come over you.

In early journeys with my Indian boys I have frequently found myself wandering on alone, some object of interest, as a bird, or the track of a wild animal crossing the path, having caused them to linger behind. On such occasions it was necessary to wait for them wherever the Indian paths intersected or branched off, for, had I trusted to myself in such a matter, I should have been pretty sure to take the wrong one. In about half an hour the ringing thump, thump of their feet would be heard, hurrying along to overtake their teacher before he could fall into mischief.

One day, while thus going on ahead, I came to a spot where a large tree had fallen across the path. I was getting over it when, from a cleft in the damp rotting wood, the head of a venomous labaria darted forth close to my hand. No harm was done, but I remained close by to warn my lads of the danger, and when they came up they inspected the spot with Indian minuteness. It would have been difficult to rout out the snake from his covert,

tedious to cut a way round the fallen tree, and dangerous to clamber over its rotting trunk now that its inmate was fully roused. So they cleared it by leaping, laughing most heartily whiie the snake's head bobbed up and down in wrathful alarm as each in succession flew over him.

In journeys to settlements where we expected to pass the night we had to carry our light baggage through the woods with us. Each lad carried his own hammock and paddle, and they bore by turns two light packages, one of which contained a change of clothes, and the other our provisions, a piece of salt pork, or a knuckle of ham (if we had been lucky), some coffee and sugar, and a few salt fish. A little cassava bread they always carried, and we were sure of having some hospitably offered to us at the Indian houses we might visit.

My own burden was a cloak and umbrella, sometimes my hammock, and always a paddle. The latter is most serviceable as a prop in swampy land, or as a weapon of defence in any sudden danger.

When we came to a swamp my lads crossed at once, but I had to take off shoes and socks, and sling them round my neck. In wet weather there are many undrained portions of forest land to cross in succession. These delay progress, and repeated soakings cause the feet to swell, so that at last you find it easier to go barefoot than to pinch them into shoes again. But walking with bare feet gave me, in the month of March, for two or three successive

years, what is called by the negroes "ground-itch," *i.e.* blains and blisters, which form on or around the toes, and sometimes break. They arise, I believe, chiefly from walking on hot sandy soil, after wading through swamps, at a time when your blood is affected by the rising temperature of that season of the year. You ought then to rest; but if obliged to move on you should put on your shoes, first cutting slits or gaps in the upper leathers to ease the pressure. The attack does not last long, unless you manage badly and get an ulcer.

In those journeys the forest paths are always pleasantly cool; but branches continually impede you, as the Indians are of low stature and only cut away so much as will allow themselves to pass in single file. The greatest inconvenience I experienced, however, was from being caught at times by the merciless tropical rains, while crossing swamps on slender spars laid on the surface. I have more than once had to stand for a considerable time in the midst of one, getting wet through, while waiting for a lull, for it is impossible to go on against the blinding rain, and keep your feet at the same time, even though you turn in your toes as the Indian does, which is the best means of keeping your balance on such a narrow pathway.

As you approach Indian dwellings you usually meet abandoned fields, their cassava cultivation requiring fresh land every year. Those old fields are always overgrown with jungle, which is composed of every variety of bramble and creeper,

vegetable hooks and spikes being all around to lay hold of or to pierce you. There is no breeze in those old fields, as the surrounding forest screens them from the wind, and the full heat of the sun blazing overhead is almost overpowering. Faint and weary, having crossed one, you reach another stretch of friendly forest shade, and wipe away the moisture which streams from your brow. Then onward,—still onward,—until perhaps you are gladdened by the sight of immense clumps of feathery bamboos, each clump being from fifty to eighty feet thick, and of great height. They were planted long ago, are beautiful to look at, and pretty sure indications that an Indian village is close at hand. And so you walk on, until you see the thatched roofs of the open houses in the clearing beyond.

Allotting a certain portion of time to this work of visiting the heathen villages, and taking each in turn, I went successively through the territory of the western Arawâks who dwelt around me; through the "Caribi country," as the settlers call it; touched upon the land of the Acawoios, and went through a portion of that of the Waraus. A place to hang our hammocks was always given us, and only once in my experience was money demanded for the accommodation.

The Arawâks had more civilization than the other Indian races. It is true that at that time they seldom in their own houses burdened themselves with clothes (though now, being Christianized, they dress well), but whenever they went on the river a

shirt, with a hat or cap, would always be seen on the men. The women wore a petticoat slung with a string over one shoulder, and their long and glossy, though coarse, black hair was neatly braided and secured by bodkins, or other ornaments, of silver.

Of all the Indian races I found the pure Caribs, who were once dominant over all the tribes except the Arawâk, to be the most handsome in person, picturesque and warlike in appearance. Their native cloth, supported by a cord round the loins, and adorned with tassels at either end, is much more ample than is worn by any of the other tribes. On festive occasions they wear them six yards in length. They are passed over one shoulder from behind, so as to cover the front of the body, and the extremity is then thrown over the other shoulder and hangs down the back. The forehead and the front of the hair are well daubed with the red annotto, and the face is often painted with the same vermilion pigment in various patterns. Some men also smear it over the body and limbs.

The Caribi women frequently had their bodies and limbs painted with large *blue* spots, but were not so decently attired as the men. Clothing, indeed, seemed to them a secondary consideration. But there were two points of primary importance to every female Carib in the way of personal appearance. One was to have a hole in the lower lip, and two or three *pins* sticking through it, with their points outward. Before they got pins from us *thorns*

were thus worn. The other indispensable thing was to have each leg adorned with a *broad red strap* of woven cotton, fastened tightly round the ankle, and another strap just below the knee. Between these "sapuru," as they call them, which compress the limb from early infancy, the calf appears unnaturally large. It is a national distinction. No respectable Caribi mother, of the old school, could possibly appear in public, or allow her daughters to appear, without those red anklets and stockingless garters.

The Indian women we always found at work. The men, when not clearing bush, hunting, or fishing, would be found reclining in their ever-ready hammocks.

Being regarded at first as a mere boy, and totally unacquainted with their widely differing languages, I was much embarrassed among those various nations, and found it difficult to get on with them. After the first salutations were over the chief man would point to a stool for me to sit on, or to a beam from which to suspend my hammock. When this was done I would try to explain the object of my visit. Puzzled or vacant looks would soon show that it was, under the circumstances, quite unintelligible ; so we waited, uncomfortably enough, until the hour of evening prayer. Then my lads were called and the family beckoned to draw near, which they did (always taking care, however, to *keep behind me*), and we would sing a psalm or hymn, such as my boys had learned at the mission

to join in. The wonder of the savage family at finding that boys with copper-coloured skins like their own could do this, was always great, and not a little increased when they afterwards heard them repeat in English the Apostles' Creed. When we knelt in prayer all followed our example, or tried to do so, *squatting* instead of kneeling.

The same was repeated in the morning, generally with a larger congregation, the news of our arrival having been carried to neighbouring settlements during the night. Perhaps among all these there was a man who could understand a little English, and I would ask him to interpret the simpler parts of the Creed for me, or to explain the subjects of some Scripture prints which I showed them. Very sad blunders, as I afterwards found, used to be made by these interpreters, but at that stage it could not be helped. The people had, at any rate, received their *first* lesson. They understood that some one had come, inviting them to the worship of Him whom the Caribs call "Tamosi Kabo-tano" —*the Great Father which is in Heaven.* They had heard the symbol of the Christian faith pronounced, though as yet without understanding it, because it was spoken in a strange language. After a time, by God's blessing, *their various tribes should be taught it,* "every man in his own tongue wherein he was born," and acquire thereby the knowledge of the Saviour from sin and death eternal.

Up to this point there had been little on my part to bring on a collision with their sorcerers. For

that class of men, though they serve and seek to propitiate spirits whom they themselves acknowledge to be evil, never deny the existence of the Eternal Father. That is acknowledged by every Indian of every tribe; only they offer Him no service, believing that He is too high to notice them.

But afterwards, when the story of the Saviour's birth, teaching, sufferings, death, and resurrection began dimly to assume some form in their uncultivated minds, and to show some of the power which, when set forth in its simplicity, that wondrous tale of God's love has over simple hearts; when groups of wild-looking people would squat around their teacher in the moonlight, on the sandy plain, in the midst of their little village, to listen to the great tale—though poorly told, and worse interpreted, to them—then opposition became strong. The sorcerers of every tribe saw clearly that a religion was gaining ground which requires of its adherents, as their first vow, to "*renounce the devil and all his works*," and that it would certainly destroy their influence in proportion as it was received by their countrymen.

Among the Arawâks, however, five sorcerers, following the example of Cornelius, had embraced Christianity—God thus blessing the seed sown. Three of them had destroyed their marakkas; these are magical rattles—calabashes, with the pith extracted, and small stones placed in them instead—a stick, adorned with parrots' feathers, being run through each for a handle. With these rattles, and

the copious use of tobacco smoke, they assist their loud-voiced incantations, and summon their familiar demons to the side of the sick man's hammock. The other sorcerers gave up their rattles to me in token of their renunciation of the practice. These things exasperated those who remained in heathenism.

At times I was warned that they were going to "piai" me, that is, to cause sickness or death by their art; information which gave little uneasiness, for though the Obiah men of the negroes, and these Piai sorcerers of the aborigines, do often cause sickness and sometimes death by the terror their threats inspire, they can only have those effects on minds imbued with a belief in them. In order to injure others they must resort to actual *poison*, as in compassing the death of Mr. and Mrs. Youd.

There was among the Arawâks a sorcerer whose influence withheld many from attending our mission. At a great meeting for drinking paiwari (which is a fermented and intoxicating drink, made from cassava bread, first toasted and then well masticated by the females), he gave public notice of his intention to throw me into the river. Thinking it good to "appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober," I sent him word that I intended to pay him a friendly visit. He took good care to be not at home when I called, but left one of his sons, who gave me a civil reception.

Disappointed in meeting the old man, it seemed best, having got thus far, to strike through the

woods and visit the settlements of his adherents. After passing through some we came to a kind of bush, called "muri" by the Indians, which was quite new to me. It is on a large plateau, the crest of the sand-reef which divides the Aruabisi coast from the basin of the Pomeroon. The trees are of no great height, and they grow in clumps, which look as if they had been planted in regular order by the hand of man.

The acouri, or agouti, and other small wild animals ran over the sand from one covert to another; and the deep footprints of a tapir crossed our path, with those of her young, which had trotted at her side. A pleasant place it is at morn and eventide; but there is no shade, and the heat of the noonday sun, reflected from the glaring white sand, is terrific. It gave me fever, and after waiting at an Indian settlement until the attack went off, I had to return to the mission, disabled.

In a second journey I crossed the "muri" successfully, and at length found myself on the banks of the Capoue Lake. Calling together the Arawâks who dwelt around it, I advised them, as they were remote from their brethren, to attend, with the negro peasantry, one of the churches or chapels on the cultivated coast near them, or the mission which the Rev. W. Austin had lately established for the benefit of the Arawâks of Ituribisi, a neighbouring lake; and which, under the care of his excellent daughters, was prospering greatly.

On our next visit to Capoue, we found, to our

surprise, no people there. But in the evening we saw them winding round the shore, and coming towards their homes from the coast, where they had been attending Divine service. They had done as they had been entreated to do, had found good pastors and teachers there, and my journeys through the "muri" bush were ended.

In a country like Guiana, so intersected by navigable streams, you, as a matter of course, do not travel by land when you can go by water. A boat, or canoe, carries your baggage much more readily than it can be borne on the heads and shoulders of men. Of *men*, as it would be in your case; but amongst the aborigines in their native state the burdens are chiefly borne by *women*.

Often have I pitied the poor females as I have met them undergoing this hard labour, of which an instance early impressed itself on my mind, more by its picturesque accessories than by any exceptional hardship.

During one of my first visits to the Caribi country a family crossed, on a fallen tree, the beautiful stream we were ascending. The father, a young man—strong, graceful, and looking, with his short-cut hair and vermilion brow, the beau-ideal of an Indian warrior—came first. He simply carried his paddle and his gun. The poor wife, a young woman, had her person nearly hidden by the variety of articles she was laden with. Cooking utensils, with cassava and other provisions, were carried in a huge and weighty basket at her back, which was

supported by a broad strap of bark round her brow. Both hands were full, and she had a heavy babe at

A CARIB FAMILY.

her breast, which was lying in a small hammock slung over her shoulder. Two other children, a boy and a girl, were dragging at her. When they came

to the rustic bridge the man stopped and looked at them; then, taking the boy on his shoulders, he strode across, leaving the little girl to come behind, dragging upon her heavily laden mother.

This was all in perfect accordance with Indian custom—*man* is required to hunt, fish, fell the forest, and protect his family; *woman* to cultivate the field, cook, and bear burdens. If any one had compelled that man to carry his wife's load, she would herself have objected to it as a degradation to his manhood. Independently of which, in a country infested with wild beasts and dangerous reptiles, it is necessary for the man, who goes armed in front, to have little to impede the use of his weapons. On his courage and activity the safety of all frequently depends.

It is sometimes difficult for strangers to cross streams on those Indian bridges. Many years after the above incident the bishop and myself, coming late to a Carib settlement, were led by the hand in the dark, along the trunk of a large tree, over a stream which we heard brawling twelve or fifteen feet below us. We were glad when we thought ourselves safely over, but were still told to "keep on." So on we went, along the same tree, over another part of the same stream, which has a loop or sharp curve in its course a little distance off. The mora trunk which thus twice bridged it in one span, was, as I afterwards found by measuring it, 108 feet from the place where it had been cut to where the lowest branch had grown.

It was a ticklish matter to cross on the round, slippery trunk, but we could not help being amused at the Caribs who led us. In their anxiety for our safety they begged us most seriously to "hold on with our feet," forgetting, in the darkness, that our toes were enveloped in boots, while they wore none.

While going through the woods up the narrow streams progress is interrupted every few minutes by fallen trees. Some you haul your craft over, others you pass it under, and often you must clear your way with axe and cutlass.

While passing one day under a fallen tree, with four or five Indians in a canoe, we found ourselves in dangerous proximity to a venomous snake. I have forgotten the name of the species, but it has a great deal of vivid scarlet among the colours which adorn it. It was crossing the stream on the trunk we had to go under, and being alarmed at our approach it lay down. Still more alarmed when we were nearly touching it, it reared to strike us with its fangs. Our bowman saw it, and, horrified, cast himself down ; so did the next man ; so, scarcely knowing why, did I and the two men behind ; the steersman laying himself back at full length over the stern, and clinging with his feet to the bench in front of him. We glided under so rapidly that the bewildered snake knew not which to strike at. Having got past we stopped to look back, and saw him in a very nervous and irresolute state of mind, moving his head hither and thither. He was three-

fourths of his way across, yet still hesitated, and looked at us; finally, he thought it best to go back again, and did so.

A day or two after I nearly lighted on a labaria in jumping ashore. Incidents of this kind are frequent, and sometimes fatal to the Indians, though not often, the smaller kinds of snakes being as desirous of getting away safely as the man can be. The larger boas, however, both the land and water species, will attack any living creature they fancy they can swallow, and if they once get their folds around you you are lost, unless help be near.

Three Indians were, in 1869, walking through the woods near the Moruca, when a kolokonaro, about seventeen feet in length, sprang upon and seized the leg of the hindmost, but had not time to coil round him. That reptile had to be well beaten with sticks by the other men, who had no cutlasses with them, ere it would let go and retire. The bite was severe and the marks indelible, but there was no venom to cause death. That species, sometimes called the *land* camùdi, is not so long, but thicker and stronger than the water-boa, and more handsomely marked, the most vivid colours being on the tail.

It was a handsome specimen of this snake which I once saw an Arawâk capture alive, with a noose and a forked stick. The man crawled noiselessly under a low bush, and with the stick dropped the noose over the snake's head. Then, quickly pressing the fork on the neck of the reptile, he passed

his hand down the tightened cord, and completed the capture.

Another beautiful snake which will attack you, is the konokosi, or bushmaster, the largest of the venomous snakes. One of these, in a path at Waramuri Mission, sprang at an Indian, who, having been lame from his youth, walked with a crutch and a stout staff. Catching sight of the snake as it was springing, the man received it on his crutch, and knocked it down with his staff. Unable from his lameness to fly as another man would, he stood his ground, and fought the bushmaster, which, baffled by the crutch and belaboured by the stick, was at length killed,—poor Joe, the cripple, receiving great honour for his prowess from his admiring friends.

Wild quadrupeds you often meet as you go through the woods. Those of the felidæ I will notice further on. They seldom openly confront you.

The ant-bear is harmless if you avoid him, but irascible and dangerous if molested, and his enormous claws sometimes prove fatal even to the jaguar, as if they fairly clutch they never relax their hold.

A herd of bush-hogs sometimes compels the traveller to get up a tree, and remain there for many hours. It was never my lot, I am thankful to say, to be thus beset, but I have known others who have been thus situated, one of whom described it as exceedingly unpleasant, the herd waiting for

him below as long as anything eatable could be rooted up, without the least regard to his hunger, thirst, weariness, and anxiety in the tree above.

You will sometimes see the sloth high up amongst the branches. We once met an unfortunate individual of the smaller species in the nearly dry bed of a little stream. It had somehow fallen when trying to cross from the branches of one tree to another. A more helpless creature than that poor sloth I never saw. My Indians were for killing and eating him, and looked astonished when I told them to help the poor wretch up the bank and place him among the trees. It would not do to handle him, for the sloth's claws are very large, sharp, and powerful in their grip. So they got a stout stick, and held the middle of it over him. When he had clutched it he was lifted up the bank into a tree, and was soon away, moving, claws uppermost, among the branches;—not grateful to us, probably, but happy in his own way.

At times a commotion and chattering overhead will call your attention to the monkeys. The species most frequently met are the common monkey, the red howler (erroneously called the baboon), the quata, or spider-monkey, the orohe, a grave-looking species, covered with shaggy black hair, and the pretty little kaboanama, or sakuwinki. These last will give you their company for some distance, chattering merrily as they leap from tree to tree.

Not long ago I saw one of those amusing little

fellows get into trouble. We were rounding a corner in a very narrow stream when we heard a scream, and saw a splash in the water before us. A sakuwinki had been in the act of jumping across, when our sudden appearance distracted his attention ; he missed the tree he was jumping to and caught a sapling, which bent with him into the water. As it sprung up again he flew off it like a ball, bounding upwards till he had reached one of the topmost boughs. His mate, who was preparing to follow him, screamed piteously when she saw him fall, and then yelled, shrieked, and chattered in a torrent of monkey objurgation. Part of this might have been addressed to us, but, from her looks and gestures, the greater portion seemed directed at her unfortunate partner ; probably for his awkwardness in falling, and his soiled and damaged fur, so disreputable in a sakuwinki! To which he, looking very penitent and crestfallen, replied at times by a low deprecatory whistle.

The poor little monkeys had no knowledge that they were both within gunshot, and that the men with me, who were then laughing at them, would, if alone, have probably ended the scene by shooting them both.

Thus, as you journey through the woods of tropical America, strange quadrupeds, birds, and reptiles continually cross your path. The study of their habits will amply repay the interest you may take in them. Only do not let them tempt you far from your companions, or from the beaten path.

Indians themselves are sometimes lost when hunting, but, unless lamed or otherwise seriously injured, they are sure to find their way out somewhere and rejoin their friends. They know what to do in the forest and how to subsist. But a civilized man, unused to the bush, would probably wander round in a circle, until exhausted with fatigue, hunger, and anxiety. I lost myself once, though only for half an hour. When I found that I could not recover the path the sensation was not pleasant, for it was getting dark, and I was in a strange region, of which I had heard that it was much infested with jaguars. The distant scream of a child falling down a bank providentially caught my ear, and showed me in what direction I should find the next Caribi habitation, where I had left my crew.

Once also, after a long walk through the woods, I was benighted on the banks of a small lake, called Quacabuca; but on this occasion I was not lost, for I knew where I was and had a companion, which makes a vast difference.

It was in the year 1848, when, returning one evening from a missionary journey to the banks of that small lake, which it was necessary to cross, we were surprised at not finding the little canoe which a few days before we had left there. An Indian family lived on the opposite shore, and the two Arawâk men whom I had with me thought that they must have taken charge of it. So we halloed till we were getting hoarse, but no answer

came across the still water. The family were evidently absent.

Our position and prospect were not pleasant. The sun was going down, and it was not possible to retrace our steps through the forest in the dark; the waters of the lake were in front and a morass on either side. An old abandoned house was near, but so infested with snakes and vermin that we dared not attempt to lodge there, and, to crown all, we had no food left, nor matches to kindle a fire. Neither had we a gun, though if we had possessed one it would not have been of much service in the dark.

After a short conference it was agreed that the taller of the two Indians should wade and swim over, and look for a craft of some kind, while his comrade stayed with me. So the latter, John Hendrick, arranged our few packages on the strip of white sand at the margin of the lake before night came on, while I watched our emissary proceeding cautiously through the water until he was lost to sight in the deepening gloom.

As the shades of evening drew on something like a ripple passed swiftly across from one side of the lake to the other. It was so sudden that it seemed as if some invisible giant had cast a quantity of fine gravel across from east to west. My companion said, "Himirri!" This is the name of a small fish which abounds there. Why they should leap from the water in multitudes and in such swift succession, and leap *once only*, I could not under-

stand; but the Indian said it was "their fashion." Many years after I saw a similar ripple of small fish just after sunset on the Demerara.

In those equinoctial regions twilight is short. We were thankful that it did not rain, but there was no moon. Feeling very chilly and weak from long-continued illness, I put on my cloak, and paced to and fro on the small strip of sand which was free from bush, dreading to sit down lest I should get cold and have a return of the fever. So the hours of darkness passed. The clamour of various species of frogs was indescribable. We also heard snakes and alligators (or what seemed such) rushing through the aquatic plants which covered the swamp, with now and then a splash. I thought of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and of the rushing noises which Bunyan's Pilgrim heard there; but my Indian companion sat still on the baggage. He seemed to take no notice, but he heard each noise, and knew well what creature produced it. A jaguar or a large camudi snake would have quickly roused him from his apparent apathy, but, thank God! none came near.

Towards midnight I felt sure that I could hear the stroke of a paddle far away; but he said, "Abakoro," a word somewhat long, which only means "No." Again and again I felt sure that I heard one, but he still said "No," and he was right; an Indian in such cases always is. Motionless and silent as a statue, save when I questioned him, he sat and watched, while I walked wearily to and fro.

At last a strange sound startled me; he had begun to chant, to some tune of dismal cadence (for though their voices are soft and sweet, all their tunes are mournful), some words which might be rendered thus—

> "The morning light will find me here
> Still waiting for a canoe!"

This he continued to sing over from time to time with the most melancholy monotony, and, as the night wore away, it seemed as if his words would prove true.

At last he stopped and said, "Coriala!" I listened, but for nearly a minute heard nothing. He was, however, quite right, and the agreeable stroke of the paddle at length became distinctly audible. Then a dark object crossed the gleam of the starlight on the water and came towards us. It was our comrade, seated in the missing canoe.

Knowing how the pure Indians repress all manifestations of feeling before strangers, I was desirous of seeing how long John Hendrick would wait before evincing any curiosity about his comrade's adventures, and asking him where he had found the canoe. So I embarked, as they did, without saying one word, and we all went on in silence. After a long interval it came out by slow degrees. "Here I had to swim," said the one. A murmur, or rather grunt, of assent from the other. Another long silence until we had quitted the lake, and were descending its outlet towards the sea. "Here

I waded across and then walked on the bank." Another murmur, just audible. Finally, when we reached the coast in the early morning, he pointed to the place where he had found the canoe, which an unscrupulous black man, coming out of the bush the day before, had borrowed without leave.

So passed that night away in the swamp, between the wild forest and the lake; not pleasantly, indeed, but with no worse consequences than fatigue and anxious watching. Having been so unexpectedly left without shelter, fire, or any earthly protection at the time when all wild creatures are on the alert for prey, we were very thankful to Almighty God that we had remained during those hours of darkness unmolested.

## IV.

# CORNELIUS THE ARAWÂK.

(1840-1868.)

Carib incursions—Mahanarva—First visit of Cornelius—Its results—Translation work—Attack on the mission—The cholera—Death of Wilhelmina—"Captain" and churchwarden—Removal of chapel—Domestic trials—Decline of strength—Decease.

THE gentle people found by Columbus in the larger West Indian Islands were of the same origin as the Arawâks of Guiana. They once possessed the whole of the islands. But before the coming of the white

men the Carib warriors had overrun the lesser Antilles, from Tobago to the Virgin Islands; slain all their male inhabitants, and taken possession of their lands, and of their women. Hence arose the difference of language between the sexes there: the women's tongue being a dialect of the Arawâk, while the men spoke the language of their conquering fathers.

The Carib race were at that period very numerous and powerful, both on the southern continent and in the islands they had subjugated. The great body of their nation dwelt on the Orinoco, which they considered as the cradle of their race. Those located near the Atlantic dwelt chiefly on the rivers Pomeroon, Essequibo, and Corentyn. In Surinam and Cayenne they were also numerous, and strong enough to baffle, for many years, all the attempts of the white colonists to settle there.

They tyrannized over, and enslaved, all the tribes in the interior of Guiana, and the Waraus on the sea-coast. But the Arawâks always resisted the Caribs, and were never reduced to subjection.[1]

[1] The Arawâks, and others dwelling near the coast in Guiana and Trinidad, were exposed to invasion both by sea and land. Driven to desperation at length by the attacks of the island Caribs, they assembled a large flotilla, attacked Tobago, exterminated all the Caribs who then dwelt there, and returned again to their homes.

But the Caribs of St. Vincent's still continued to assail them, using Tobago as a resting-place in coming and going; and there is little doubt that the cannibal scenes which Defoe, in his charming fiction, describes as enacted on "Robinson Crusoe's Island," really took place *there*.

There had been wars between the two races from time immemorial; until the Dutch colonists found it their interest to enlist the services of both, as a check to their runaway negroes. So during the eighteenth century there was peace between them.

But about the time of the establishment of British rule, hostile feelings began to break forth again. Quarrels and aggressions took place between individuals, and the two Indian nations began to talk of reprisals and of war.

The most powerful of the clans into which the Carib race had been divided was that on the Essequibo. In the middle of the last century, though much reduced, it was still said to number a thousand warriors. It is now almost extinct. But at the beginning of the present century its chief, Mahanarva (or Manarowa), was the most powerful Indian in Guiana, and had the greatest following.

That man coming to pay a visit of ceremony to the Governor, advantage was taken of his presence for settling the differences between his people and the Arawâks. A conference was proposed and agreed on. The representatives of the two nations met at Plantation Henrietta, on the Aruabisi coast, and the mediation of the British officer charged with the protection of the aborigines was successful. All talk of war was laid aside, and they parted with mutual professions of goodwill.

The Arawâk who acted on that occasion as

the chief speaker for his race had by his side a favourite nephew—a little boy of fairer complexion, and with hair less coarse and more wavy than is usual with aboriginal Indians. From this latter circumstance he was called "Saci-barra," *Good-hair*. That boy gazed with some degree of awe upon Mahanarva, a robust and stately personage, whom he heard the whites style the "Carib king." He observed all that passed at the meeting, and listened also with attention to the tales which his people at that time recited—traditions of the wars of ancient days, and incidents of individual prowess—treasuring them up in a retentive memory, of which I had the benefit in after years.

As the boy grew up, being of an active disposition, he travelled more than Indians of his race usually do; went long distances up the Orinoco and Essequibo; and finally took a wife, and settled on the banks of the Bouruma (Pomeroon), his native river: about ten years before the Gospel was first offered to his people there.

That Gospel he was the first of his people to embrace, and he held it fast unto the end.

After a weary period of rejection by the Indians in those parts, I was surprised by a visit from one whom I had not before seen or heard of. A figure at the doorway of my hut darkened the apartment at noonday. I looked up and saw an Indian of about forty years of age, small and spare in person, but with good aquiline features and intelligent eyes, standing there with a little boy at his side.

It was Saci-barra, afterwards baptized by the name of Cornelius.

He had just returned to his place after a long absence, and hearing of the efforts the Church was making to evangelize his people, had come to me to learn something of the "Word," the religion newly offered to them.

I know not by what means his eyes had been opened to the folly of his countrymen in serving evil spirits, but they were so. A sorcerer himself, he had become disgusted with the deceitful tricks of that profession, had broken his magical gourd, and renounced the practice. He now desired to know and serve only Him whom his people called "Ifilici W'acinaci, Aiomun Kondi;" the *Great Our Father*, who *dwelleth in heaven*. Of the Christian doctrine of Redemption and of the *Saviour* he seemed at that time to know nothing; though, in common with other Indians, he must often have heard the name of Christ in the blasphemous oaths of so-called Christians.

As he knew only a few words of English, we had much difficulty in understanding each other; but what he did comprehend seemed deeply to impress him. He went away resolved to do all he could himself in the way of learning, and to use his influence in bringing in his family and people.

The impression he had made upon me was most favourable. He seemed the most simple-minded and straightforward Indian I had yet seen, and the opinion then formed I never had occasion to change.

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MISSION ON THE POMEROON IN 1843.

Two of his children, a boy and girl, were at once placed with me. But the boy, who was only about five years of age, soon began to long for his mother, and the wild, free-and-easy-life in the bush. When he saw his parents leaving him the following week, he ran along the bank of the river, following their canoe, and screaming with childish passion. He got as far as he could along a tree which had fallen into the water, and seemed determined to cast himself in headlong. His sister, following, prevented that; and he was only able to throw away his little shirt, which in his paroxysm he had torn from his back.

The sorrows of children are, however, easily assuaged. Kind and gentle treatment soon soothed the boy, and in a short time he was running about and calling his sister "Ko-i-ahle" (the *red and blue macaw*) to join in his diversions.

When Cornelius had brought the other members of his family, and, after many visits to their settlements, we had gained other families of their tribe, a handsome chapel was, with help from England, erected there. We soon had a school of about thirty Arawâk children, and the place became as cheerful as it had formerly been dreary and dull.

The system we then organized, and which worked very well, was as follows:—The parents came on Saturday, stayed at the mission during Sunday, and left on Monday morning. Smoked fish and game were left with their children, and plenty of cassava bread. And if during the week there had been a prosperous hunt anywhere in the forest,

ending in the slaughter of deer, bush-hog, or tapir, a portion of the fresh meat was sure to be sent to the school. The children there were happy. Shooting with bows and arrows, fishing in the river, and bathing in it morning, noon, and evening, filled up their leisure hours. On Saturday there was no school work, and on that day I generally visited the neighbouring settlements, with the bigger boys as paddlers and guides. And when our voyages began to be extended to distances which took up several days, the school was broken up for a week, and the children went home.

On the first of these expeditions Cornelius was my guide. He had informed me of the existence of a beautiful lake, embosomed in the woodlands to the westward, with islands in it inhabited by his people. The lake was called Akawini.

After marching for some hours through the woods, we reached the border of the lake—a "wet" savannah, or reedy swamp. There we embarked in a very small canoe, the sides of which had rotted down nearly to the water's edge. So decayed was it that, when we were seated, water ran in in three places. Some thick stems of an aquatic plant (called moco-moca) were then cut, grooved, and fitted on, to make the decayed portions a little higher. Three of us then ventured on it, one paddling very gently, another steering, while I sat in the middle as still as I could, for only perfect steadiness could enable us to accomplish our voyage when we came to the open water.

In the savannah we passed through, an immense camudi snake had, not long before, sprung upon an Indian. His left arm was held by the coil, but the right was, for the moment, free. That would, however, have availed him but little, had not his wife handed him a knife, with which he inflicted a severe cut upon the snake's neck, causing it to quit him and retreat.

Many of those monstrous reptiles were known to lurk in that marshy and secluded place. If one had only raised its head from the water, and laid it over our side, we must have been instantly swamped. There was a fine chance for the water-boas, but they did not know it.

Among the Arawâks there we met with some success; and having now witnessed Cornelius's energy and zeal, I took him with me on more distant expeditions.

With his brother-in-law, an Arawâk named Thomas, he accompanied Mr. Smithett and myself on our first voyage to the Moruca and Manawarin. On our return they paddled us across the sea in a very small craft, and at dark midnight, to enable us also to visit the Wakapoa lake during that expedition. When we had reached it, after sixteen hours' labour, Cornelius, in his address to the old chief of that district, alluded to the venture, as showing love for their souls, in a manner that greatly moved him and his wife.

At a subsequent visit the latter greatly astonished us by her living head-dress, which at a distance

we could not make out. It proved to be a large monkey, of the red howling species, which grinned at us horribly, grasping her brow with its fore-hands, its hinder ones being placed on her shoulders. It was rather a bold act to shake hands with that chieftainess, for the ill-looking creature showed its teeth, and seemed inclined to spring at us over her head for doing so. That "baboon," as the settlers wrongly call it, was evidently a spoiled pet, who considered the old lady as his own exclusive property, and resented any notice she might take of other animals.

Soon after this, our good bishop, Dr. Austin, purchased Cabacaburi Hill as a more healthy site for our mission. Cornelius erected a large house there, improving on the usual Indian style of dwelling (which is a mere open shed) by making in it a chamber enclosed and floored, and adding an outbuilding as a kitchen. A visit which I paid him there one day resulted in many years of mental labour.

It was a very sultry noontide, and as I approached the house I saw my Indian friend alone, resting in his hammock. At first I thought he was merely taking a siesta after his morning's work, but as I drew nearer I could hear him labouring painfully in his efforts to read the Ten Commandments from a little English Prayer-book. A gentle breeze was sighing through the tall bamboos, and a thick carpet of their leaves helped to deaden the sound of my approaching footsteps, so that he was not

aware of my presence as I came and looked over him. He stumbled on until he came to the words "third and fourth generation," when he paused and sighed hopelessly. As he did so I laid my hand on his shoulder, and asked in Arawâk "if he could understand the words he was trying to read." He rose with a sudden start, dropping from his face what should have been a *pair* of spectacles, but which, as I picked them up, I found to have but *one glass* instead of two.

After answering an inquiry respecting the person who had imposed on his simplicity by selling him the one-eyed spectacles, he replied to my first question by telling me that the words were "so hard that he could not at all understand them; that his daughter, who, having been at our school, could read fairly, could not enlighten him as to their meaning; that he knew the Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, etc., in English by heart, and had a general idea of the leading truths of Christianity; but that the words themselves of our Bible and Prayer-book were so different from the 'talkee talkee,' or negro English to which his people were accustomed, that those Indians already grown up (who really used Creole Dutch rather than English) would never learn effectually by them."

I felt, by what I had myself observed, that it was *all too true*, and that nearly a generation must pass ere the Arawâks—the most advanced of all the tribes around me—could be readily and generally taught through the medium of our tongue!

It was necessary to remedy the evil at any cost. I knew already a good deal of Arawâk, and now asked him "how it would be if the Lord's Prayer, Creed, etc., could be printed in their native tongue." He caught eagerly at the idea; and so, with the aid of himself and family, the work of translation was commenced. We did as best we could, blundering at first immensely, our orthography having to be made, and our grammar discovered, as we went on. It was not easy, for the construction of all those aboriginal tongues is, in most points, directly opposite to our own.

The Lord's Prayer and Creed, printed in George Town on a small sheet, as the firstfruits, were eagerly received and learned. So rapidly did the knowledge of them spread, that at a settlement more than thirty miles away, I found some Arawâks able to repeat both without the necessity of my teaching them.

Many passages, however, troubled us exceedingly, from there being no corresponding words or phrases in their tongue. Others could only be expressed by words of ambiguous meaning. But on the whole we got on fairly; the Indians inventing now and then a compound word to express the idea required. Their children, taught at the schools, began also to be a great help to me.

An unexpected aid afterwards arose in the person of Wilhelmina, sister of Cornelius' wife. She had, when I married some time before, attached herself to my household, learning from my wife what she

could, that she might communicate it to the women of her race, and thereby teach them civilized habits. As an instance of this I may mention that she *first* procured washing-tubs, flat-irons, etc., and taught her Indian sisters in that district the art of the laundress. "For," as she observed, "if we are to wear clothes, we must learn to wash and do them up." But when I first came upon them in the act of "doing them up," they ran away, ashamed and afraid of being laughed at.

That good woman never spoke to her mistress save in Arawâk, in order, as she afterwards confessed, to "make her learn it quickly." Her regular and intelligent features used to brighten when discussions took place on the meanings and power of words; yet she never interfered in any way between me and my male assistants. But frequently when they were gone, and I would mention in my family points on which I was at the time hopelessly puzzled, she would modestly give the phrase I wanted, or a certain clue to guide me to it. She had a clearer mind and judgment than any of her race I ever met with, male or female.

Years after, I found her aid invaluable in correcting the first part of Genesis, the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles. These, with a catechism explanatory of the Apostles' Creed and Sacraments, the Baptismal and Marriage Vows, some prayers, and afterwards a larger catechism on the historical portions of the Old and New Testaments, completed our labours in the Arawâk tongue,

and effectually did what they were intended to do. They are now but little needed, as the Arawâks generally have learned English at our missions, and some can read and write it very well.

In carrying on that work I was greatly hindered by the wants of other races, whose necessities were even greater, because they were more barbarous and ignorant. First of these came the Pomeroon Caribs, who were jealous. I had to stop and do something of the kind for them; and thus, until health broke down utterly, we had the two nations, each in its own tongue, instructed on alternate evenings throughout the week.

Knowing the eloquence and zeal of Cornelius, I wrote, in Arawâk, and in large Roman characters, a translation of our Lord's last charge to His disciples, from St. Mark xvi., and taught him to read and explain it. With this, serving him both for text and credentials, he was sent on a mission to scattered and distant families whom we had not yet been able to influence. We bade him "God-speed," and he went away quite alone in a little "buck-shell." After nearly a fortnight he returned with three canoes and twelve men. These represented twelve Arawâk families, who soon after attached themselves to the mission.

Much of the influence this Christian Indian began to acquire among his own and other races arose from his disinterestedness and self denial. When the terrible potato famine in Ireland led to charitable collections all over the British Empire, our Indians,

among others, were appealed to. But they were at that time suffering themselves from the severe drought of 1845-6, which had reduced the most industrious to poverty. Cornelius, seeing their embarrassment when appealed to, went to his house and fetched ten dollars, all he had, and which he had been to the coast to earn by working on a sugar estate, in order to buy clothes for himself and family. He gave one dollar each for himself, his wife, and eldest daughter, and then offered the remainder to his countrymen, telling them to borrow, and repay when they should be able. This started a collection, which, with aid from another district in that river, amounted that week to fifty-two dollars for the starving Irish.

Some time before this a gross imposture had been practised on the Indians over a large extent of country. They were summoned to a place in the distant interior by a pretended message from God. The Acawoios, who were still heathen, and some of the Caribs, fell into that snare.

After a period of delusion they had to return, and many of them, being starved, began to plunder the provision grounds of those who had remained at home. In resisting their depredations, wounds and death were sometimes inflicted, which, among such wild people, lead to blood-feuds without end.

A young Carib from a distant place, who had seen his father murdered by some marauders, and found his own life in danger, came to our mission as to a place of refuge. One Sunday night, how-

ever, he was attacked in the darkness and stricken down, though not killed, close to the houses of his countrymen, who became absolutely wild with excitement and rage. While I was trying to calm them we heard the cries of strange men hailing each other or defying us in the forest close at hand. This increased their indignation, that they—"the 'Carinya,' the warrior race—should be exposed to assassination, or stealthily watched and beset by Acawoios, who would not dare to come and fight in the open!"

I never witnessed a wilder scene. There was panic, mingled with baffled rage; men with guns, clubs, and cutlasses were moving hither and thither in search of hidden foes, and their wives followed them closely, waving firebrands, which cast a red light over their copper skins, and lit up the dark forest with their fitful glare.

Guards having been, at my suggestion, set to prevent surprise, and some little order thus restored, I went to see how matters stood at the Arawâk village, to reach which I had to go through the grove of bamboos.

Nearest to these was the house of Cornelius, and he, aroused by the uproar and the cries in the bush, was standing in front with his gun, for the protection of his family, and ready to let fly at the first person who should come on them through the darkness. A shot from him would have been doubly grievous. The Caribs, however, had foreseen the danger, and sent a young man, who came

running behind me with a blazing firebrand, and said, "Take this; if you go in the dark they will shoot *you*."

I found the Arawâks with guns loaded, and ready for any emergency, but perfectly calm, their steady demeanour contrasting favourably with the excitement and confusion among their Caribi neighbours. Cornelius was of opinion that, whatever assaults might be committed upon individuals, the mission was perfectly safe, adding that he would "like to see the people who would attack it."

The Caribs also had a particular wish to see—and to get at them. The next morning early they scoured the forest, but could only see where they had been lurking. They also picked up a basket of Acawoio manufacture which had been left behind.

The Acawoios, whether many or few, had left the mission, and, after alarming the inhabitants of some distant settlements, quitted the river. We were fortunate in getting through that business without loss of life. A few years later a party of Acawoios massacred wholesale the inhabitants of an Arawâk settlement at Etooni, on the Berbice river, without mercy to sex or age.

Not very long after that period of excitement Cornelius, with his heart full of grief, was steering the canoe which carried me sick from the mission. My wife and infant son were also lying sick beside me, and tears ran down the good Indian's cheeks as he silently looked on us, and thought we were then to part for good and all. But he still con-

tinued to live at the mission, and when, after a long interval, a teacher came to reside there, he helped him as he had helped me.

The cholera visitation of 1857 was most fatal there. It broke out on a Sunday amongst the Arawâks. Most of them hurried away, but about twenty-five remained, having relations stricken down. There were about thirty Indians in all on the spot, *every one* of whom was attacked by the terrible disease, and more than a third of them were dead within three days!

The conduct of the Arawâk woman, Wilhelmina, was at this crisis remarkable for foresight and self-devotion. When two or three had died, and others were being attacked, she was seen to take her paddle and go to her canoe. "Oh, Wilhelmina! are *you* leaving us?" said one of the mission family to her. "Our provisions are nearly all gone," replied she; "I go to get cassava for those who may survive." So she went a few miles to her field, and came back in the evening with a load of vegetable provisions.

By the time she got back eight had died. Those yet unstricken by the disease shrunk, one and all, from nursing the ninth victim. So she came forward and devoted herself, believing that the undertaking would prove fatal, as in every previous case. And it was so, for as soon as the man she had nursed was dead, Wilhelmina herself was stricken down. Her family wished to remove her to her own house, but she said she would not carry the

sickness thither. She bade adieu to all but her husband, with whom she joined in prayer in their native tongue, and then remained silent, and in a state of collapse, until her soul was released. Seventeen others were then lying in various stages of cholera around her.

Cornelius and those who survived were isolated, for all were too weak to leave the spot, and no one from the other settlements dared to go near them. So they had to remain till convalescent, subsisting on the cassava which Wilhelmina, with almost prophetic forethought, had provided during her last hours of life.

The cholera having a little abated in my parish on the coast (after seven hundred and seventy-two had been attacked and two hundred and twenty-four had died), I borrowed a boat, and went with a supply of remedies to see how my old mission had fared—for all communication with it had suddenly ceased, and I feared that something terrible had happened. I was glad to see Cornelius among the living, though he was sadly emaciated and weak. All the survivors were mourning for lost relatives, and deep and general was the grief for Wilhelmina.

Very solemn was the administration of the Lord's Supper next day to the ten surviving Arawâk adults, the mission family, and two or three others who had come with me—for all seemed standing on the brink of the grave. But there was little time for reflection; after a few necessary arrange-

ments, and a most sad visit to the new-made graves, I had to hurry back to the cholera patients on the coast.

Cornelius never fully recovered his bodily strength after that near approach to death. But his zeal and energy were by no means abated, of which he gave full proof when, a year after, it became necessary to take down the old mission chapel, and to bring the materials to aid in the erection of a new one on the Mission Hill. The distance was about a mile. With axe on shoulder, he and his sons went to their canoe, and led the flotilla. In a short time we saw the little craft returning, top-heavy with their burdens, which were immediately seized by the women and children, and dragged up the hill, the men paddling back for more. So well did all hands work, that in one day the whole building, save one boat-load, had been brought round piecemeal by their united labour.

In putting up the new chapel, I found that our funds would not allow at first of any better roof than one of troolie thatch, and told the people that they must be content therewith. They silently acquiesced; but Cornelius, unknown to me, called the leading men of the different tribes together, and held a meeting by moonlight in the partly erected chapel. He then persuaded them to cut shingles or wooden tiles—work which none of them had ever attempted. "Let us not," said he, "allow the house of God to have a roof of *thatch, no better than our own.*" His words and determination

moved the minds of all; the shingles were made and given freely. Unexpected pecuniary aid, to enable me to hire a carpenter to put them on, was given by Lieutenant-Governor Walker, and so the ignominy of the thatch was avoided.

Cornelius was about this time made "captain," or head man, of his tribe in that district. With the cordial consent of the Christian Indians of all the tribes, he also became warden of the new chapel. This latter office he valued greatly; and when, at the bishop's suggestion, a wand or rod was to be used as a distinctive warden's badge, he supplied the handsome "letter-wood" of which it was made, and had it tipped with silver.

It was good to see him about this time, which, like the Indian summer of the northern continent, was probably the most serene and pleasant period of his life. In the intervals of duty, when at the mission, I loved to visit his house, and generally found him reading, though with *more suitable spectacles* than at first. He had been well past middle-life ere he began to learn, but he laboured most perseveringly until he could read the English New Testament fairly, though he never could *speak* our language with anything like facility. His great delight, however, in his leisure hours was to read the Arawâk Gospels, especially the parables of our Lord. These seemed to give him not only the most solemn lessons, but unceasing delight. He must have known Matt. xiii. and similar portions by heart, but he still read them over again and

again. I have since observed that the parables of our Lord exercise the same attraction over the Acawoio Indians in their own tongue.

When Cornelius was about sixty years of age he lost his son-in-law, an industrious young man, who had been his chief helper in providing for his family. He felt this loss the more, as he had many females and small children depending on him, and his three elder sons had left him, according to the custom of their race.

For in the marriages of the aborigines of Guiana the young man literally "leaves father and mother," and goes over to the family of his wife. Jacob's contract with Laban, or the principle of it, is strictly observed. The young Indian does not, indeed, keep flocks and herds, for his father-in-law has none; but he cuts down the forest, makes a large "field" for him, and is expected to stay with and give him the benefit of his labour. So that the possession of marriageable *daughters*—not of sons—is advantageous to the Indian who is growing old.

Now, one of the sons of Cornelius had betrothed himself to a young woman near the mouth of the Essequibo; and his brothers had also gone thither, intending to settle near him and do likewise. Their father, finding himself unable to support his remaining children without aid, went to ask them to return to the old place.

At that meeting they begged their father to come over to them with his family, that they might provide for him there as Joseph in Egypt did for

Jacob. But the old tree cannot be transplanted so easily as the young. Cornelius could by no means consent to leave his beloved mission, and the graves of his departed wife and children. Neither could he prevail with them to go back with him. So matters remained as before; the sons continued in their chosen residence, and the old man returned to his place—to labour on alone.

The young woman to whom the elder brother was attached died soon after. They all then returned to their father, to leave him no more. They settled in their own district; and two or three years after, I married, in one day, those three sons and one daughter of Cornelius, to the great joy of their father, in the chapel which he had so largely helped to build.

In 1865 Cornelius accompanied Archdeacon Jones and myself on a missionary expedition to the Arawâks above the rapids of the Demerara. But he was now getting too old for the incessant—daily and nightly—fatigue of such expeditions. His strength also gave out when searching, some months after, for a shell-mound he had seen long before, similar to the great tumulus or "kitchen midden" I had just opened at Waramuri. He was unable to reach it, but another messenger whom I sent followed his instructions and discovered it.

When Governor Hincks soon after visited Waramuri, to examine the mound there and the numerous remains of cannibal feasts we had found therein, Cornelius, at the head of his people, was

among the two thousand Indians who had assembled there to meet him. And this was his last voyage save that which I am now about to mention.

In 1867, when I had to revisit England in quest of health, Cornelius came to the coast to bid me adieu. He was deeply moved when the moment of parting arrived. I knew that the old man loved me well, but was not prepared to see tears on his cheeks, such as I had only seen once, when he thought I was going to die, about twenty years before.

When I told him that, if spared, I should return and see him again, he replied, "Yes, you will return. And you will meet me again, but not here. In this world I shall see your face no more."

I thought him by no means near his end, and told him so. He was not, however, to be persuaded; but, composing himself, bade me an affectionate and final adieu.

He went back to the mission, and continued pretty well until a few months before my return, when, instead of coming from his settlement for service as usual, he one Sunday sent word that he had a little fever, but that the mission family were to expect him on the Wednesday. On that appointed Wednesday his body came indeed, his mortal remains being brought for burial. Great was the sorrow of all connected with the mission, for every one loved him. He seemed to belong to *all*, and all felt that a good man had been taken away from among them.

In his last hours he charged his sons to do all they could for the mission and the Church of God. The eldest, who succeeded him, to the hour of his death religiously obeyed his father's dying words.

They buried Cornelius under some mango trees, planted by himself near his house, and carved his name on the bark of one of them. Probably a more durable memorial will be the bell, sent by some kind English friends for the mission chapel about two years after. That bell, by some tacit understanding, has always been rung by one of his family; and the duty will, I trust, be continued by his descendants, who will thus perform, in another way, the work he did for twenty-eight years—that of calling his countrymen to worship God. The inscription on the bell is:—

"In memory of Cornelius, the first Indian convert to Christ in the Pomeroon district. Died February, 1868."

How changed by death is the relation between the Christian pastor and those of his flock whom he believes to have entered into the heavenly rest! No longer their spiritual guide and teacher, his humble desire and hope is to be their follower—following them as they have followed Christ—and to be with them partaker, through grace, of the everlasting kingdom.

With this lowly Indian man, and the woman whose work is here recorded with his, we hope, as he said, to "meet again."

NOTE.—The Arawâks, as we have stated in the above sketch, fully believed, even while in their heathen state, in the existence of the Supreme Being; but they offered Him no worship. Their great endeavour was to propitiate those inferior spirits whom they believed to occasion sickness and pain.

Some of their national customs were very peculiar, especially those relating to marriage and child-birth.

We found their nation divided into families—about fifty in number, as far as we have been able to ascertain. Each has its distinctive name, "Onisídi," "Siwídi," etc. These all descend in the *female* line; male, as well as female, children taking the family name of their mother (not of their father); and no individual, male or female, was allowed to marry one of the same family name.

A very strange practice was observed at the birth of a child. The father was required to take to his hammock, as if *he* were sick, and was there carefully and respectfully attended by the women. I once saw a heathen brother of Cornelius—a man in robust health—thus "lying in," in a most provokingly absurd manner, while the mother of the new-born infant was cooking food—none, apparently, regarding her!

In explanation of this absurd and superstitious observance, some say that the spirit of the babe hovers between the father and the fleshly tenement provided for it, attaching itself, at first, rather to the former. Therefore the man lies in his hammock for some days; and when gradually resuming his active life, is careful to avoid all violent exercise, lest the little soul, which follows him like a shadow, should be injured or lost in the forest. In the latter case, unless some sorcerer can, by magical arts, recover the stray spirit, the body, untenanted, will fade and die.

This is a specimen of the strange superstitions fostered by the piai-men, who make their profit thereby. Such ideas abound amongst the negroes, as well as amongst the red men; and much curious information respecting the above, and the superstitions of both races, was given, a few years ago, by the Rev. C. D. Dance, in his "Notes from a Guiannese Log-book."

## V.

# WASHIBA AND WARAMURI.

1842–1874.

Manawarin Caribs—Peter's "Church" at Washiba—Sleeping above the crowd—Hammocks—Adventures in swamp and rapid—Waramuri Hill—The successive teachers, chapels, and vicissitudes of the infant mission there.

IN our last sketch mention is made of the Manawarin, as a river visited by Mr. Smithett and myself in 1842. Mr. Smithett had lately come from England to help in the work, and was then stationed in the lower district of the Pomeroon.

We visited the Manawarin (a tributary of the

Moruca) at the request of the chief of the Caribs who lived there. They had heard of my journeys among their countrymen near the head of the Pomeroon, and received us very kindly.

Through calling themselves Caribs, and wearing in their scanty costume the peculiar ornaments of that race, this clan had mixed greatly with their neighbours, the Waraus. Most of them spoke both languages, but their Caribi, as I afterwards found, was considered impure by the haughty unmixed race dwelling near me. These latter affected to despise those who had not preserved the blood of their conquering (and cannibal) ancestors from admixture with that of a race so inferior, and would hardly allow them to be "Carinyach" at all.

But it made no difference to us whether they were of pure or mongrel breed. They were human, and needed the knowledge of Him who saith, "All souls are Mine." And, with the sole exception of Arawâk Cornelius and his family, I had nowhere found Indians so willing to listen to the words of Christ, as the old chief Wanyiwai and his people on the secluded Manawarin.

After that visit, however, we saw the old man and his wife no more. Small-pox came and swept them away, with multitudes of their race. That disease, the great waster of the aborigines of America, raged fearfully in 1841–42, and seemed at that time to have marked the Caribs especially for destruction.

So great was the terror it inspired, that in some

places stricken persons were left to perish; and in others, when one died, fire was brought, and the house and corpse consumed together!

Peter, the eldest son of the good old chief, succeeded his father, and was friendly to us.

He first gathered his people to meet us at his own place; and, finding it too small, proposed to them to build a place of worship on a hill named "Washiba," from the tree of whose wood the Indian bows are made. All agreed, the work was soon done, and our gatherings were then held in "Peter's Church."

They called it a *church*, from the English word which they had learned; but it was only an open shed, about seventy feet long, and as wide as they could make it without central posts to support the roof. It was without sides or enclosure of any kind, and altogether a most primitive building.

We had in it a numerous congregation, however, and when night came on, the Caribs declined to go to their respective "places," and prepared to sleep there, that they might be in readiness for worship and instruction in the morning.

So the men went into the forest and cut spars, which they lashed with bush-ropes to the upright posts along each side. Then there was a general tying-up of hammocks, which soon were hanging round in tiers, one above another. As many also as could find room tied theirs to the cross-beams; and, as it was a dry night, a number slept under the trees around. Each family made a blazing fire

or two, according to their numbers; and the glare of the ruddy flames was weirdly reflected from their naturally red skins — still more deeply reddened, as were also their hammocks, by being smeared with annotto.

My companion and myself were politely asked in which tier we would like to sleep—"above, or below?"—and were puzzled to decide. There was a risk of tumbling from the upper row, upon a hard-wood spar and a Carib family—with painful consequences; while, if we slept below, with the family above us, there was a risk of some juvenile member of it falling upon us. It was a choice of evils. We elected at last the higher tier; partly because we fancied that we should there have less smoke to inflame our eyes, partly also because we could thence have a better view of the red, wild-looking throng around us.

We could certainly see the Caribs better; but they could also get a better view of us. And if, as we are told by classical authority, it be "a pleasant thing to be pointed out by the finger," we ought to have found it very pleasant; for the children's fingers were incessantly pointing at us. We found also that we could not move without a simultaneous uprising of female heads all round, and inquiries made of each other whether "the young white men were coming down?" And the loosely constructed building creaked so, when any movement was made, that it seemed possible that we might all come down together, and sooner than we desired.

My hammock was very attractive. It was of English manufacture, conspicuous as being of pure white, and with a fringe of tassels along either side. The women and children evidently thought it a most lovely hammock, and probably envied the possessor. But neither he nor they knew the worthlessness of the material of which it had been woven. It fortunately held together while we were there aloft, but split asunder in the course of the next voyage.

I have more than once witnessed a similar accident happen to fellow-travellers. In such a case those who are fortunate enough to have a boarded *floor* beneath them are not much hurt; they can spread the torn hammock on the floor, if they choose, and continue their slumbers upon it. But if you should happen to be in a wild region and far from home, the ruin of your hammock is a serious business. You cannot sleep on the bare ground, as you are there exposed to damp, dirt, and all kinds of horrid and dangerous vermin. If you have a tent-boat near you can turn in there, but if your canoe be open (as ours at that time always was), you will be probably drenched with rain, or wet through with dew before morning, and violent fever result from the exposure. The hammocks of our Carib friends were of stout cotton, hand-woven, but of very open work. Their women, however, used to make closely woven ones, which took a long time to manufacture, and were expensive, but durable, and highly valued by the old Dutch colonists for

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house use. For the hard usage of real bush travelling and encamping, the best hammocks are those made by the Warau Indians of "tibisiri," the fibres of the leaf of the ita-palm. These are durable and do not readily soil. And when the meshes begin to give way, they do not treacherously cleave asunder all at once and deposit you on the ground.

The reader will kindly pardon this digression, as to a traveller in such regions the subject is really an important one. The experience of nearly forty years has taught the writer that a man, having Indian companions, may do very well in the bush without a *gun*, but that he cannot get on at all *without* a *hammock*.

The primitive Carib "church" at Washiba was visited by us more than once, and we also went through the Arawâk settlements on the lakes in its vicinity, meeting there several adventures.

We were once nearly engulfed in a quagmire, having been deceived by its dry crust. We were also nearly capsized in a rapid, once by running on to a "snag," and on another occasion, near the same spot, by a commotion amongst our crew, caused by a young alligator. The reptile had been stunned by a violent blow, and laid in the canoe as dead; but he revived amongst their naked feet, and had to be finished off with a paddle. In the struggle we nearly turned over.

Soon after this, as we were returning to comparative civilization, my friend attempted to put on his boots; but they were shrunken from alternate

wet and heat, and his feet, after several days' walking amidst swamps, were too swollen to go into them. Fortunately so, for in the toe of one was hidden a bloated black scorpion, which at length dropped out, and was killed before it could use its sting.

Many years have passed since then. The building at Washiba has long since decayed and fallen. It was not needed very long, for when at length the Waraus began to listen to our teaching, the Caribs joined with them to form a central mission, near the junction of the Moruca and Manawarin, on a high sandy hill called Waramuri. This new mission was, as has been said, placed in charge of the Rev. J. H. Nowers, who assembled many of the neighbouring Indians, and built, first a thatched dwelling-house, and then a chapel-school of a more civilized type than the Carib "church" at Washiba.

Continual sickness of himself, wife, and family compelled the departure of Mr. Nowers in less than two years. He was succeeded by a catechist, who did not remain long, and afterwards by the Rev. Mr. Wadie, who found the house much dilapidated, and the chapel devoured by wood-ants.

Mr. Wadie, in 1854, got the Caribs and Waraus to erect a second chapel[1] near the spot where the old one had stood. In this new building the eastern end only was enclosed, the sides being left open to admit the breeze. The Indian congregation sat on rude benches, which they had

[1] The primitive style of this second chapel is shown in the wood-cut at the commencement of this chapter.

hewn for themselves out of logs of wood. He made no floor to the nave, finding that the ants ate the boards as fast as they were renewed.

In three years the health of this energetic man also broke down. He was carried out to me on the coast apparently dying. Getting better, he returned to his post, had again to leave, and died soon after.

A zealous catechist—Mr. D. Campbell—was then appointed as resident teacher there. During the time of his residence we built a *third* and more substantial chapel, framed with hard wood, and with the floor raised six feet above the ground, that the destructive ants might be more readily combated.

That was in 1864. In seven years only (incredible as it may seem) *that* building also had become untenable. The wood-ants—of that most destructive species which lives in the ground, which will give no sign of their presence, and are almost unassailable by poison—had got up, boring their secret galleries through hard-wood blocks, tar, and white lead, and invisibly devoured the building, until literally not a solid board remained. They were so hollowed that the feet of children went through the floor, and we could push our fingers through the sides with ease!

The Indians then, at my suggestion, brought logs of the caraba (or crab) wood, which a black man taught them to saw into boards. These, containing a bitter principle, seem to offer more resistance to the destroyers, and we have since used them in our other mission buildings.

Such, and so numerous, were the renewals of the place of worship required on that mission within twenty-five years from its foundation; and, by what almost seemed a fatality, each undertaking of the kind has been followed by the removal, through sickness or death, of the resident missionary, Mr. Campbell dying before the last-mentioned chapel was renewed. Yet the mission, though from these causes it has often been desolate and abandoned (once for four years), has not been forcibly extinguished, as was the case with Pirara. The people, when deprived of their teacher by sickness or death, have always rallied round his successor; and when chapel after chapel was destroyed, in a manner which made us weary and sick at heart, those poor red men still brought their offerings of timber cheerfully to build anew the house for the worship of the Lord their God.

The coming in of the Waraus, who will form the subject of our next sketch, rendered Waramuri the most populous mission station in Guiana.[1]

[1] The Caribs of the rivers Pomeroon and Manawarin are branches of a horde which came from the Orinoco a few generations back. Such, at least, is their tradition.

Like the Indians of every American race I have known, they believed in the existence of a Great and Good Spirit, the Creator and Upholder of the Univèrse. Like the Orinoco Caribs, they call Him "Tamosi Kăbo-tăno," the *Ancient of Heaven*, though, in their heathen state, they paid Him no worship, considering themselves as beneath His notice.

Their mythology, of which I have given an account in "Legends and Myths of the Aboriginal Indians of British Guiana," is very curious and interesting.

## VI.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WARAU RACE.

**Dwellers in trees—Squalid habits—Curious legends—Their chiefs—Polygamy—Repulse of Christian teachers—Favourable change—"Translation committee"—Effect of illustrations—Gradual elevation and advance in decency, etc.**

"WE have seen a people who live in trees" said, in my hearing, a traveller who had visited the mouths of the Orinoco.

We were not more than a hundred and fifty miles in a direct line from that region, yet the traveller in question found sceptical hearers. One of them suggested that he must mean "monkeys, not men." This was indignantly repudiated. He meant "neither monkeys nor apes; but human beings—men and brethren—living, with wives and children, in dwellings built in trees."

I listened, as a young stranger, with some surprise to the above statement, not knowing then that Humboldt had mentioned it as a custom of the Guaraon (or Warau) nation, and that English-

men, as well as Spaniards, had noticed it centuries before.

Fires, burning high amidst palm trees, were viewed with surprise and wonder by Sir W. Raleigh and his men, as they passed through the channels of the Delta of the Orinoco, on their famous expedition to the Caroni, in search of El Dorado.

Those fires showed the habitations of the natives of that uninviting region, which is a vast sheet of muddy water during several months of the year, and becomes a quaking bog as the water drains off again.

Innumerable clusters of the ita (or mauritia) palm stud the surface of that wild and muddy region. The Waraus use the upright trunks of the living trees as posts, thatch a roof overhead beneath their fan-like, leafy crowns, and make a flooring of split trunks above the mark of former inundations. On this rude floor they place a thick layer of clay for a hearth, and kindle thereon the fire necessary for their daily wants.

The canoe, or woibaka, as they call it, gives them the power of locomotion until the floods subside. They derive much of their food from the waters, and the fruit and pith of the palms beneath which they live help them to subsist in times of scarcity.

Many of the Waraus live south of the Orinoco mouth, on the rivers Barima, Waiini, and Moruca. The floods on those rivers, which flow through an immense swamp to the sea, are severe, but do not

absolutely compel the inhabitants to live in trees. It was with this division of their race that I first became acquainted. There was a large gang from the Barima working as woodcutters on the Pomeroon, near the hut in which I then lived.

Their general squalor—coarse, matted, and unkempt hair, which both sexes wore long, and only cut across the forehead to enable them to see before them—and the dirt with which their children were begrimed, struck me most unpleasantly. Each woman had a petticoat, indeed; for their employer, an Englishman, was married, and his wife insisted on that approach to decency. But I afterwards found that those garments were only worn there in compliance with what they deemed our absurd prejudices, and were gladly laid aside on their return to their forest homes.

But, though squalid in appearance, and disgusting in their habits, the Waraus have some good qualities. They are the best makers of canoes, and the most vigorous and skilful paddlers that can be found. They are careless, improvident, and importunate beggars, yet when they work they do it with spirit, and are capable of great exertion. And when suffering for their improvidence by privations, which is probably half their time, they bear those privations with patience, and even cheerfulness.

In their drinking bouts they are sometimes passionate and violent, at other times good-tempered and merry. They enjoy a practical joke immensely, and hail it with shouts of laughter. Of this, un-

fortunately, we have had some painful instances in our mission services.

The occasional tumbling over of some wild stranger, while trying to kneel (which no Indian can at first; all, from long habit, *squatting on their heels* instead); the accidental breaking of a bench overcrowded with people, who would be crouching on it with their whole weight, their heels being, as usual, drawn up under them; the sudden exit of some young man or woman, with three strides and a jump, through the nearest window, being unaccustomed, in their own open dwellings, to the use of doors;—anything of that kind would produce an explosion of mirth, distressing, of course, to the officiating minister. No irreverence or offence was intended; it simply arose from their keen perception of whatever seems comical, and from their never having learned to control their feelings anywhere.

That vein of humour, which is characteristic of the Warau, enters into the serious traditions of his nation. It even peeps out in that which is the most sacred of all, which ascribes to his race, so low at present, a celestial origin—a *literal descent from heaven.*

Elsewhere I have recorded the amazement with which, while searching into the traditions of their past history, I learned that the Waraus originally dwelt in a country above the sky. The arrow of a bold hunter, falling by accident through a hole, revealed to the man who searched for it the existence

of this world below, and a rope of cotton furnished him with the means of descent. His report of abundance of game upon earth brought down the whole race (who had only birds, and no quadrupeds, above) to enjoy it, without the permission of the Great Father, who had placed them in those higher regions, where no noxious thing could enter to annoy them.

So far all is serious enough, and not without its religious lesson; which is still further developed when the legend goes on to describe the want of water here below; which, in answer to their prayers, the Great Spirit—merciful, though offended—removed by the creation of lakes, rivers, and streams.

But the grotesque element, irrepressible in the Waraus, appears in that part of the legend which relates to their exclusion from their former heavenly abode. A woman, the last of the party, could not, according to the story, squeeze herself down through the hole in the sky. Neither could she climb up again. And, as no help could be rendered, she remains there fixed to this day, and thus deprives the human race of their only means of peeping (through the hole) into the world above.

The imaginative power of this race runs riot in their legends. I mean those of a mythological and fanciful kind. But they have few which relate to their past history. It seems evident, from some of their mythical tales, that they were, at some remote period, driven by the Caribs to their swampy retreats; and no one who knows them will be

surprised thereat, for they are, as a race, timid and unwarlike.

From Spaniards and Venezuelans they have suffered greatly, as well as from the more warlike Indians of the interior.

At present most of the Waraus south of the Orinoco would be glad to consider themselves under British rule; and their chiefs even on distant rivers will display the union-jack before their houses if they can get one. But that is rather a mute appeal for our protection than an evidence of its existence. That region is virtually a "no-man's land." Refugees from Cayenne have infested it, and many murders have been committed there.

Under the Dutch rule, and for half a century under the British, there was what was called an *Indian post* at the mouth of the Pomeroon. Here dwelt an officer, who, in the days of slavery, had a certain number of armed Indians always with him, whom he could send to summon the chiefs of their respective tribes, in the event of any disturbance on the plantations.

Those chiefs, or captains, as they were called, were recognized and subsidized by the Government of the colony; and each received a silver-headed staff, with tassel attached, to bear in his hand, and a crescent of silver, with suitable inscription, to wear on his breast.

One of the old Waraus, who, even in my time, still bore and prided himself on those insignia of chieftainship, was Captain Boschman. He must

have been a fine, handsome Indian in his younger days, but was, when I knew him, becoming very decrepit. Still he could not understand why his people should prefer the leadership of younger and stronger men to his own. "Those *young* men, they have no *stook!*" said the poor old chief, displaying his own well-cherished staff of office, and wondering at the little regard shown to its bearer.

The fact that the "stook," as the emblem of authority, becomes despised and set at nought when the power to wield it has departed, has been wondered at by higher personages than poor old Boschman.

Other leaders succeeded those relics of the old *régime*. But the glory had departed. The crescent and silver-headed staff of chieftainship were poorly replaced by a baton and commission as chief constable. Yet even these were gladly welcomed, so anxious is man, savage as well as civilized, to bear recognized office and rule among his countrymen.

Two of the most influential of those head-men were Captain Henry and Captain Támenawári. The former lived on the Moruca. He was short and stout, but withal a most dignified Indian; and one who, in his own way, well understood the value of "deportment." He had a large canoe, with a great number of naked paddlers, and thus travelled in great state, without any exertion of his own to help the boat along. He was usually in a full European suite of white, save that his feet were

bare; and report said that his wife had to kill any mosquito which might settle on them, while he was sitting smoking, or reclining in his hammock.

Támenawári was in most respects the reverse of his rival. A tall, gaunt man, of forbidding aspect, and differing in no way from the wildest of his ancestors, save in the use of axe and cutlass, and the possession of a double-barrelled gun. In the practice of polygamy, he was probably excelled by few of them, for he had certainly nine wives—some said ten. On this latter account he never visited our missions; and when obliged to visit the post-holder, he respected Christian prejudices so much as to bring *only one wife* with him.

The head-men, or captains, in their official visits to that officer, always, as a matter of etiquette, appeared in some articles of European dress, Captain Henry's we have already noticed; and as he also displayed an union-jack waving over his large canoe, his less civilized rival was put to great shifts when, on one occasion, he was compelled officially to meet him. It would never do for the principal chief of his river, and the husband of so many wives, to be outshone in his attire. So he got himself up with great care, though, as the wardrobe of his clan was very limited, the result was rather astounding.

A coloured handkerchief adorned his head, over which was placed an old black beaver hat, so battered in brim and crown that it looked as if it had been in a score of faction fights. He wore

also an old blue coat, with the brass buttons, high collar, short waist, and narrow swallow-tails of a past generation. And as there was amongst his clan neither shirt nor vest, that coat had to be buttoned as high as possible. Having no other garment than his native cloth, his gaunt lower limbs were of course bare, but, by way of finish, he wore *ankle-boots*.

Such was the figure which appeared one morning before Mr. McClintock, the post-holder, as he looked from his house over the sea. He soon recognized his old acquaintance, Támenawári. But the latter had not yet completed his toilet. He was standing in his canoe, striving to dispose his fingers correctly in a pair of *white cotton gloves*, and seemed terribly puzzled by the unwonted operation. That, however, was the finishing touch, and he then came forward in state towards the house. His wild people followed admiringly—satisfied that the boots and gloves of their chief would throw his better-clad but bare-footed and ungloved rival into the shade, and make a profound impression on the post-holder.

In the latter respect they were certainly not mistaken. For in his description of the interview he said, "Támenawári having but one serviceable eye, his appearance, in the attire I have mentioned, may be more easily imagined than described."

As Támenawári began to grow old, his power and influence faded. The young men thought that though polygamy was a good thing (for those

who could indulge in it), their chief was overdoing it altogether. His wives thought so too, and gave him much trouble. They were, he said, the plague of his life. His having shot one, and chopped the arm of another with a cutlass, did not cure them of their propensity to leave him. He could not understand it at all, but still struggled on, amidst a host of domestic difficulties, until a severe illness deprived him of his bodily strength, when they *all* left him. He soon after ended his life in comparative peace, an inmate of the household of his son.

Judging of polygamy by its results, apart from Christian teaching, and only by the sour and worried looks of those Indians who practise it, one may safely say, that as a man increases the number of his wives, he increases his domestic sorrows.

The efforts made to Christianize the Waraus were rather ridiculed than otherwise by the few settlers who had intercourse with them.

"You will never do any good with these people," they would say; "they cannot rise to appreciate the doctrines you would teach them." And their remarks seemed too well founded. But the Divine commission, "Teach all nations," included them as well as races of higher culture.

For four years we found no Warau willing to listen to Christian teaching, save in the hope of getting a salt fish or a little sugar at the end of the interview. They told me that "what was good for other tribes was not good for the Waraus, who

were inferior to them." So contented were they in their acknowledged degradation.

Beggary and dirt were everywhere amongst them; and once (the only time amongst Indians) I was treated with positive inhospitality, because I had brought no *rum* to give them.

Their case seemed hopeless, and all human efforts vain. But that was the turning-point, and led to better things. For the power is "not of man, but of God."

Damon, the chief Warau of that river, heard of the visit and its results; and after I had left, he took his family, and as many as would go with him, to the nearest station to receive instruction. I was soon informed of this, and went again to visit them, meeting a very different reception. In a few months from the disheartening repulse, hundreds of Waraus, with the countenance of the post-holder, were levelling the forest, and helping to form the mission, already mentioned, on Waramuri Hill.

So at last, in the fifth year, the ice was fairly broken. We had *got at them.* But to instruct them intelligibly was difficult, and to induce them to renounce one jot or tittle of their heathenish practices was more difficult still.

For several years we were in a singular state with them at Waramuri. Their sorcerers practised their incantations everywhere, save on that hill. No adult Warau dared to come forward as a candidate for holy baptism. Yet they attended Divine service in crowds, even *running* to the

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INDIAN SORCERER, OR PIAI-MAN.

chapel when the signal for prayer, morning and evening, was given; and seeming glad to appear in the presence of God. They were something like the heathen people whom the King of Assyria transplanted into the land of Israel, who, as we read, "feared the Lord," and yet worshipped their own gods, as their fathers had done.

The sorcerers of the Waraus are considered by other tribes as more powerful than their own. As there is generally some one sick, they have much practice, and are often engaged in their incantations, rattling their magical gourds, inhaling and blowing tobacco smoke, and roaring themselves hoarse over their patients all night long. Some of their juggling tricks are so coarse and clumsy, that they would readily be detected and laughed at by a people less timid and superstitious. Yet, though they must know themselves to be impostors, as far as those tricks are concerned, they seem to have faith in other parts of their system, so far as to believe that they hold real intercourse, by their incantations, with the demons which cause sickness and death. For they practise those incantations over their own sick children, and cause them to be practised over themselves when sick.

It was impossible to combat their superstitions by the use of any but their own tongue. And in this we were singularly unfortunate. Three teachers placed amongst them had successively been removed by sickness or death, and their knowledge of Warau had died with them. A small

vocabulary, which I had collected long before, alone remained to aid me.

If I applied to the adult Waraus for help, their answer was, "Namená-nahá," which implies total ignorance. But the help we could not do without was obtained from other races—the Arawâks and Caribs who lived near. I got them to turn what I required from their respective tongues into Warau, and then made the Warau children in our school turn each production into such English as they had acquired. This was a tedious and roundabout way, but it detected all errors.

A *translation committee* was then organized, which met during my quarterly visits. It consisted of two Arawâks who spoke Warau, two Caribs similarly qualified, and one or two young Waraus who were learning English. To these was added the old Warau chief, who was dull and could not construe a sentence; but his presence gave importance to the work, and was supposed by his people *somehow* to ensure its correctness.

Our place of meeting was at an old abandoned house or shed, standing apart from the mission village, and out of the reach of disturbance from the voices of women and children. The "committee" sat on rough logs, ranged on the sand in the open building; and we had carefully to examine our feet for chigoes, and exterminate them after each sitting. Altogether we were a rough and queer-looking party; and our good friends of the S.P.C.K., for whom we were then pre-

paring work, would have been greatly amused to see us.

Long before this I had known the value of pictures in teaching those wild races, of whose tongues we know so little. In my early intercourse with them we had been greatly in want of a set of Scripture prints; which, though sent out to me by one of the societies, went somewhere else. I hope they were useful wherever they went, but we were in need of them, and had to do without them. Finding something of the kind indispensable, I used at one time to carry about with me a heavy copy of Burkitt's Commentary, having at that period no other book with suitable engravings. Sometimes, being quite at a loss to explain important words, such as crucifixion, etc., I would, with pencil and paper, make a rough sketch; and generally found that the interest, which words imperfectly understood failed to convey by the ear, was excited by objects presented to the eye.

Bearing this in mind, I asked the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge to furnish us with cards, containing the Creed and Lord's Prayer in the Warau (and two other native tongues), with little engravings of important scriptural subjects ranged in medallions around the letter-press. When this was done, it succeeded marvellously with all those races. For they learned the meaning of the *engravings first*, and were thereby aroused to attend to the *words*. The Warau females were especially attracted. Poor women! they had at

last *got something they could comprehend;* and were no longer shut out, as they had before considered themselves to be.

And here I may notice, that in a year or two a manifest change took place in the appearance of those women. They would at first come to church in a painfully nude condition, and with their hair matted and dishevelled as in their native swamps. But soon the "camisa," or petticoat slung over one shoulder, began to be generally used by them; and, as a next step, their hair would be combed out, and done up in some neat braiding on their heads.

And when the society, as the work of translation went on, printed for us catechisms on the Creed and Sacraments, Baptismal and Marriage Vows, with a few prayers; and afterwards that on the Bible history, uniform with those in three other Indian tongues (the Acawoios having by that time joined us), then candidates for Baptism and the Lord's Supper came forward from among the Waraus as from the other races.

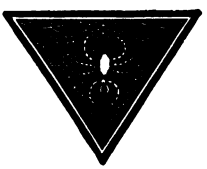
This progress was the more comforting, as the people themselves were lower than the tribes around them, and had, in the beginning of our work, manifested such total indifference.

The grace of God is mighty, and able to elevate all. May His work among these poor people still go on![1]

[1] Those poor Waraus at Waramuri gave a singular instance of *loyalty* by contributing the sum of fourteen dollars, when collections

were being made for the national memorial in Hyde Park to the late Prince Consort. The amount seems small, and a half-bit (two-pence) was the highest contribution; but so poor and abject were they at that time, that I would not have given fourteen dollars for the wardrobe of the whole assembly.

After forwarding that, with other collections, to England, I suspected some mistake, and on my next visit to them made inquiries. It then appeared that they had not been able to grasp the idea of the memorial at all, but had given their mites for the queen to use, in providing a suitable *tomb* for her lamented consort.



## VII.

## THROUGH SWAMPS AND "ITABBOS."

Inundated forests—Cannibal mound—Great gathering—Expedition to the Waiini—Passage across the Moruca swamp—Asagata—Meeting with Carib flotilla—Quarters in an abandoned house—Illness of bishop and catechist—Bats, mosquitoes, and bush-master—Return to Waramuri—Visit to the Koraia.

PASSAGES by means of which the Guiana Indians cross in their light canoes, through the inundated forests, are called by them "Itabbos." Some of them merely cut off a corner or the loop of a stream; others are on a grand scale, leading, through various links, from one large river to another.

By their means it is possible to pass from the cultivated coast of Essequibo to the mouth of the Orinoco, without going on the sea. The coast-line between the two is about one hundred and sixty miles in length; the distance by rivers and itabbos probably twice as great.

The latter are only navigable during the heavy rains, when the forests are so flooded that there is not a place to set your foot upon, save the roots of the trees which overhang you, or the trunks of those which have fallen.

Ever and anon your Indians have to use cutlass or knife, lopping and trimming away the network of lianas, branches, and other impediments, which are generally covered with creepers and foliage, and from which spiders, caterpillars, ants, and other insects are shaken plentifully upon you as you crush through them.

At other times your men find it necessary to use the axe, in cutting through fallen trunks, or those large limbs which they cannot avoid.

Sometimes you meet a huge obstacle, which you have to clamber over, while your little craft is being pushed under, and you lower yourself in on the other side. Or perhaps you are told by your crew to lie in the bottom, while they thrust it under the dead trunk of some fallen forest giant; and during that operation you fervently hope that you may not get a bush-scorpion or centipede upon you from contact with the rotting bark; nor see a labária snake, venomous and alarmed, looking out viciously

from a hole in the damp trunk just above your recumbent person.

Such is the nature of these passages, which, as has been said, can only be accomplished during the wet season, or before the floods have drained off the low forest land. For, as the dry weather comes on, the itabbo becomes more and more shallow; and, as the heat continues, navigation by such a route soon ceases altogether.

In that district, which the Dutch fitly called the "Wild Coast," there are many Indian settlements, chiefly of the Warau race, who dwell among or near the swamp-lands. Arawâks and Caribs, though in lesser numbers, live in the higher parts, and Acawoios are found near the heads of the rivers.

More than two thousand of those various races assembled to meet the governor of the colony, when he visited the mission at Waramuri in 1866, to view the tumulus (or "kitchen-midden") there, which I had opened just before, and the remains of cannibal feasts which had been found therein.

Many of those Indians begged us to plant another mission near them on the river Waiini, and the Bishop of Guiana, who was present, resolved to go through that wild region in person, and examine it thoroughly. Mr. Campbell, our zealous catechist, offered his services to commence the proposed mission. But his health was broken, and it was not until 1880 that the attempt to found it could be made.

Nevertheless, to collect the necessary information, in the August of 1872 the bishop, myself, and an assistant teacher started from Waramuri in a tent-boat, with a strong crew. A smaller bateau, containing great part of our baggage, and the plantains we carried as provisions for our men, accompanied us as "tender," under the command of a young Christian Indian who had taken the name of "Apollos." The larger boat, thus lightened, drew less water than before, and we made more speed.

In a few hours we came to the wide swamp, or *wet savannah*, which forms the water-shed between the Moruca and the Waiini. The bishop and myself had four times previously crossed it, but we found more difficulty now than on any former occasion.

It was tedious work, pushing along beneath the burning August sun, through aquatic plants and tall "razor grass," so called because its sharp edges will cut your flesh severely. And when we came to the numerous islands, through which (or around which) the channel winds, we found the impediments so great that we feared lest we should have been benighted on that wretched stream.

We took down the tent, so as to pass projecting branches or stumps in these itabbos, but still had to clear a great deal with axe or cutlass. Thus, alternately pushing and chopping away, with our boat scraping and groaning as she was being forced along, we spent the weary hours beneath a blazing sun, and were at length rejoiced to find a current

helping us. It showed that we had passed from the head waters of the Moruca to those which were going to swell the yet distant Waiini. That current soon brought us to a river, overhung with the tall, slender, and graceful manicole palms, and called Biára.

We turned, in search of a sheltered landing-place, up the Asagata; a small tributary stream, winding through a forest rich, beyond all I had yet seen, with the gorgeous, many-coloured vegetation of the tropics. The beauty of many of the plants which there met our view, and the effects of their variegated colours as we saw them massed together—tints the most vivid and glowing being relieved by others most soft and delicate—surpass description.

But the stream was much obstructed by fallen trees, as is the case with all those which are narrow and unfrequented. Every object being chequered with dazzling golden light, from the rays of the setting sun coming through leaves and branches, we passed within three yards of a camudi, or water-boa, which was coiled up, expectant of prey, on a stump which arose just above the stream. The reptile's spots, black on a yellow ground, being just like the shadows of the leaves in the sunlight, it was not distinctly seen till we had passed it by. We could not spare a few moments to return, but our men consoled themselves with the hope of shooting it when they should repass the spot the next morning.

We fortunately found a poor Warau settlement just as it grew dark. The family joined us at evening prayer, with some Arawâk neighbours, and showed us all the hospitality in their power.

Early the next morning we returned to the Biára. We saw again the stump, but the snake had quitted it during the night, and our Indians were disappointed in their hope of killing him.

We at length entered a larger river, the Barimáni. The water streaming everywhere from the inundated forest, helped to bear us rapidly on our way, and we at length reached the Waiini.[1]

We did not descend that river, which equals in size the Demerara. For as it approaches the sea, it forms, we were told, wide and shallow lagoons, the miasma from which is, at certain seasons, so fatal to health, that none care to inhabit its banks. Our object was to visit the Indians dwelling on the upper part of the river, and especially a clan of Caribs on its beautiful tributary, the Barahma.

As we went paddling on, we saw some bright-looking specks in the distance, coming down the Waiini, which proved to be Caribs in their "wood-skins" or bark canoes. They paused as they

[1] This river (written by the Spaniards "Guainia") is supposed by some to have given its name to the entire country. And it most probably did so; for the discoverers, arriving near its mouth, and asking the name of the low forest land, the Wild Coast (which has, indeed, no Indian name), would certainly be told by the natives the name of the chief river in the vicinity. As it happened to be the Guainia (pronounced "Wai-i-ni'), that name was given to the country, which in time became Guayana, or Guiana.

approached us, their skins glowing in the sunlight like burnished copper, and set off by the bright red paint with which that warrior race still proudly adorn themselves. The little craft, with the men steering, their wives, children, and parrots in front, and their dogs seated quietly behind their masters on the pointed stern, were all reflected in the motionless stream. For it was then high tide, and a heavy thunderstorm was working up, causing excessive heat and stillness both of air and water.

We soon found that they were the very Caribs whom we were voyaging to visit at Barahma. They also were on their way to visit us at Waramuri; too late, of course, as the untrained, and therefore unpunctual, Indian generally is. Having come thus far, they said they would go on to the mission and there await our return. So we bade them "God-speed," and each little flotilla went on its way.

We arrived that evening, just before the storm broke over us, at a rocky hill of about one hundred feet in height, and in shape almost a perfect cone. It had a thatched house upon it, where a Spaniard or Portuguese (said to have been a refugee murderer) had lately died. The cultivation, of which there were traces visible in the banana and plantain trees around, showed him to have been industrious.

We climbed the hill, and took shelter while the fierce lightning and heavy thunder prevailed. Our

men then commenced a diligent search for other lodgers—as snakes, vampire bats, the pallid and unwholesome lizards called "congo-sak" by the negroes; scorpions, centipedes, etc.; which just as carefully hid themselves in the old thatch when they found they were wanted.

A fire was lighted, and the rising smoke soon brought out a snake, with bright green back and white belly. I wished to save its life, as it is perfectly harmless, save to vermin. But there is enmity between the Indians and all species of snake, so that all are killed.[1] This unfortunate, though harmless and elegant, specimen was driven by long sticks from rafter to rafter, until he fell across a beam and thence on to the earthen floor, where he was in a few seconds destroyed by as many fatal blows as there were Indians to strike at him.

The next morning, taking only one boat, we went to explore the Barahma. We left the other in charge of a black man named Hamburgh, who had been brought up at one of our Indian missions, and was familiar with more than one language. He

[1] As an exception to this, it is said that the Barima Waraus have been averse to killing the water-boa, which they call "Wahma." This superstition probably arose from the mythical tale of Korobona, a maiden who was seized by a water-spirit in the likeness of that snake. The serpent-child, which was the offspring of that abduction, was killed by Korobona's brothers, and from his mangled remains arose the first Carib, to avenge the murder on the Warau race. The writer has given the tale at large in the "Legends and Myths of the Aborigines of Guiana."

had with him four men to guard the baggage and those provisions which we did not need to take on further.

The bishop had, unfortunately, taken a violent cold at Asagata, and was becoming very ill, our catechist also being disabled by intermittent fever. We did not, therefore, go very far up the Barahma, but returned and went higher up the Waiini.

At the highest point we reached on either stream we hoisted the red-cross flag of our mission boat on the trees at the river-side, with prayer that He of whose suffering it is the emblem would take for His possession the heathen inhabitants of those streams, and gather them all as sheep into His fold.

On our return to the abandoned house on the hill, we rested nearly a day for the benefit of our invalids. Our Indians took their guns and brought from the forest two fine birds, a "marudi" and a "maam." After evening prayers we made arrangements for spending at least that one night in some degree of comfort, but were greatly disappointed.

At dusk some bats began to rustle in the thatch, and our men dislodged them with long sticks. In doing so they struck one, which fell into the bosom of Hamburgh's shirt. It was, of course, instantly shaken out, but escaped. We soon after saw others flitting around, and evidently bent on sucking some of our party. They were the smaller *bush-vampires*, not so formidable as those of the larger species (which often measure two feet across the extended wings, and are said in some instances to have bled

human victims to death), but still capable of inflicting a severe wound. This creature allays the pain of its bite by the gentle fanning of its wings, and fills itself with blood while thus soothing its victim, who, when he awakes, finds his hammock saturated with gore. Animals of various kinds are thus bitten and sucked by them.

By the light of the moon and of a small lamp we watched their gyrations. Two of them coursed for half an hour between Hamburgh and myself, as if undecided whether to sup on the blood of a black or of a white man. At last, finding that we were not asleep, but watching to strike at them, they quitted us and commenced circling round the bishop, who, after suffering much pain all day, was just then getting a little rest. Seeing this, I gave a signal, and all hands sprang from their hammocks to attack the bats. One of the vampires, bewildered by the sudden rush from all sides, was knocked down and killed; the other flew out into the night and did not return.

But the gentle and musical hum of mosquitoes succeeded, and soon, amidst the growling and noise of our men slapping their limbs to kill them, they reigned supreme—a soft-bodied kind, found high up our rivers. This species is irritating enough, but it does not stab so deeply as the "gally-nippers" near the coast.

The discomfort and disturbance of this night were not yet ended. Towards morning, when the moon was setting—our lamp had expired, and nearly

all our fires had gone out—we were aroused by a sudden outcry and great commotion. Hamburgh, who slept in the thatched verandah, had discovered some large reptile gliding up to his hammock, and forthwith gave the alarm. As all the Indians sprang up it darted into the jungle, striking the thatch smartly with its tail as it turned. Our men took no more sleep, but roused up and replenished their fires, and over them discussed the nature of the intruder, all agreeing that it must have been a *konokosi*, or bush-master. This is the largest of our venomous snakes, and greatly dreaded, because it will attack man even when unprovoked. It is said to be attracted by a firebrand,[1] and they concluded that it came to Hamburgh because his fire was the only one that had kept up its glow until that hour.

The next morning one of our party said that he could detect the scent of a bush-master in the jungle near the house. But our boats were loaded and time pressed; moreover, the attempt to destroy the reptile amidst low and thick bush would have been both difficult and dangerous. So we left it in its lair, and gladly quitted that unpleasant though picturesque lodging-place.

Descending the Waiini, we entered the Moreybo. This is the wide entrance to a chain of swamps,

[1] The chief of the Manawarin Caribs told us how a bush-master had beset him one night, attracted by the firebrand he carried. He had to throw it on one side and hurry off in the opposite direction, while the snake followed the fire.

streams, and itabbos, similar to that we had passed through in coming from the Moruca. There is, not far away, a tumulus, or kitchen-midden, which Mr. Campbell had visited at my request shortly after the opening of that at Waramuri. It is called "Aláka," *i.e. the shells.* We brought therefrom specimens of the shells and of the broken human bones, which all these mounds yet opened have been found to contain—relics of a cannibal race which once dwelt near the lagoons of that great swamp-land, but which is now extinct in Guiana.[1]

The itabbos connected with the Moreybo give you a short passage of about a day from the Waiini into its sister river, the Barima. There is, lower down the Waiini, a larger channel called the Mora.

You can go through either, and on the third day after leaving the Waiini reach the Barima mouth, and behold its waters mingling with those of the southern and largest outlet of the mighty Orinoco. We did not attempt the voyage, as the waters were draining off so fast that we could scarcely get across the swamps on our return to Waramuri.

A few days' rest at that mission restored our invalids. We found there the same great gathering of the aboriginal races which we had left, and with them our Carib friends from the Barahma.

We spent the next Sunday with them, and then

[1] Cornelius, my Arawâk friend, said that those primitive cannibals had been called "Meyanow." His ancestors, according to tradition, had, after a desperate struggle for existence, exterminated them.

returned to the Pomeroon Mission, full of thankfulness, I trust, to Almighty God for the increasing spread of His Gospel; for during that voyage many families had been received into the outward fold of Christ's Church,[1] and a great cry for instruction was coming from the recesses of that great swamp-land.

The above is extracted from the journal of one of our expeditions from Waramuri through the chain of swamps and itabbos leading to the Waiini. There is another and very difficult itabbo leading from the Manawarin to the Koraia, a branch of a lake called Wakapōa.

Through this we passed more than once to visit "Adam," the head-man of the Arawâks who dwelt there.

On one of those occasions, having passed with difficulty through the inundated forest, we found that that was the least part of our labour, which commenced in earnest when we had quitted the high bush and got into the swamp; for there was not water enough to float our heavy boat, and it was only by the most laborious exertion of the bishop and all hands that we could move her on at all. We had thunder, lightning, and rain to add to our discomfort, and when we got into deeper

[1] During that one voyage the bishop confirmed 154 Indians. I baptized 146 adults and infants and married 28 couples, while 289 received the Holy Communion at our hands. All these had been receiving instruction for a long time from the teachers resident on our missions.

water could not find the channel. It was not until nightfall that we discovered it and got to our destined shelter, barely escaping the unpleasantness of having to wait till morning amidst the thick razor-grass, reeds, rushes, water-lilies, and the great camudi-snakes which hide among them.

When we got to Adam's house we met a hearty reception, and found the family desirous of Christian instruction. The next morning the neighbouring Arawâks with some Waraus assembled, and we had a most interesting meeting.

A set of Scripture prints which I had brought were the great point of attraction. One of them seemed to rivet the attention of our host. It represented Christ bearing His cross, and surrounded by the soldiers and executioners, carrying the nails, hammer, etc., wherewith to crucify Him. This little engraving, though rude and coarsely coloured, seemed to exercise a sort of fascination upon Adam. He continually referred to it, asking me numerous questions in his own tongue, and seemed deeply impressed by our Lord's sufferings which that picture set before him. At last I gave it to him, and he fixed it against the palm-leaf partition of his house, that he might have it constantly before his eyes.

Damp and insects have doubtless long ago destroyed that little coloured engraving, but it did good service in its day. Under God it was instrumental in moving the hearts of those secluded people; it brought our host and his family to the

baptismal font, and made them, when the season permitted, attendants at our nearest mission.

There we subsequently from time to time met them; but up to the time of my final breakdown in health we had not been able to visit them again at their place on the Koráia. Sometimes other duties prevented; at others, when ready to go, we found that the waters had already drained off from the forests, and we could not get through the "Itabbo."

NOTE.—The opening of the shell-mound on Waramuri Hill (in 1865–66), and the discovery that it was a kitchen-midden, containing human relics, excited great attention in the colony, there being no other antiquarian remains of equal interest, save the "Timehri," or ancient carvings on the rocks in the interior.

That mound, which seemed composed of shells, chiefly periwinkle, is more than twenty-five feet high, and of large circumference. It stands on a sand "reef" or hill, of considerable elevation. Over the brow of this the refuse shells, etc., had evidently been thrown, lodging at first against the side, and rising by successive accumulations, during many ages, to swell the tumulus to its present height above it.

Its nature, distinct from all around it, was a standing puzzle to us, until the accounts, published in the newspapers, of the kitchen-middens examined in Denmark and elsewhere, seemed to throw some light on its origin, and I had it cut through.

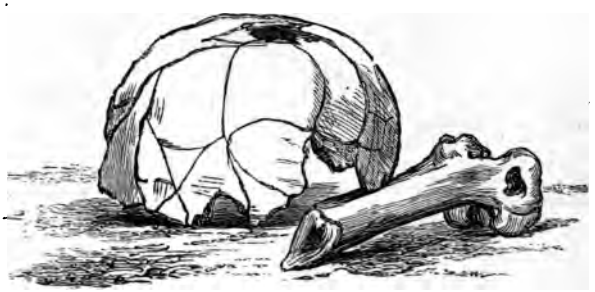
We found the mass of the tumulus to be composed of fish-bones and shells of various kinds, with the fragmentary bones of quadrupeds and birds; and other matters, chiefly relics of meals which had been consumed many ages before.

Among these were the bones of men, women, and children, with their skulls all broken, and the long bones split open. "This," our people said, "was done by a man-eating race, who, in ancient days, lived there; and they did it to *get at the marrow.*"

When the Governor and his suite visited the tumulus soon after, the human relics, old stone axes, etc., found therein, were removed for scientific investigation.

Soon after this, I instituted a search for other mounds; and our people discovered *five*, of the same character and in similar positions, though many miles distant from each other. One of these, at Siriki, on the Pomeroon, is 250 feet in length, 90 in width, and of the same height as that first opened at Waramuri. It contained, amongst many other relics, the bones of a man of great stature and massive frame. The skull, which was of great thickness, had been broken into twenty-seven pieces, forming a sort of puzzle, to which Mrs. Brett discovered the clue. The relics found in all these mounds were embedded in shells, like those at Waramuri.

That great swamp-land was well called the "Wild Coast." The ichthyophagous and cannibal savages, who formerly dwelt there, and are now said to be extinct, must have been of the lowest type of humanity.



# VIII.

## THE FELIDÆ OF GUIANA.

Indian proverb—Arriyan—War in the forest—Ocelot—Kanáima superstition—Puma—Black and spotted jaguars—Maquarri dance—Hubbard—His encounter with a jaguar—Sad end.

"EVERYTHING has its tiger." The above is a proverbial expression amongst our Indians, and refers to the state of danger in which all creatures in this world live. Instead of the word "tiger" put *destroyer* or *deadly foe*, and its meaning will appear.

I heard the saying from an old Arawâk, named Arriyan, whom I had asked to tell me the names

of all the species of tiger in the woods around. Every feline animal (except the domestic cat) is, in the patois of the river people, a *tiger*.

Arriyan, who was a keen hunter, and liked to talk of the wild creatures he had slain, was most willing to give the information required. So, seating himself on his Indian stool, beneath the cool thatch of his open house, where I was resting from the noonday heat, he began to tell of all the species of "arua" [1] he knew.

Commencing with the great spotted jaguar, as the "arua" *par excellence*, he told me of the formidable "karimetu árua," or *black tiger;* the "kwiarra-aruá-te," *deer tiger*, which is the *puma* or *cougar;* the "abueya-aruá-te," *bush hog tiger*, which is the larger ocelot; and the "labba aruá-te," another kind, which preys on the *paca*, or water-hog. The "korihi-aruá-te," *rat tiger*, closed a list of the feline creatures which I had seen and knew to be in the forests around.

But he went on to mention other varieties, some of which he said hunted in packs, were only found in the distant interior, and would not cross water to follow their prey.[2] To these he also added other

[1] "Arua" (spelt "jaguar" by the Spaniards) is the Arawâk word. The other races have different names for the same animal. The Waraus call it "tobi," the Caribs and Acawoios "kaikusi," and so on.

[2] The kind called, from its cry, "waracobba," which is the trumpeter bird. Most Indians believe in their existence. I never saw one of these tigers, nor met with a man who had. Of their supposed habits curious tales are told.

animals, which, though destructive and carnivorous, I knew by their claws could not be classed with tigers.

After a formidable number of beasts of prey had been thus spoken of, each distinguished by the name of the creature it was most accustomed to devour, Arriyan wound up with the proverb above mentioned, which, that I might fully comprehend and be impressed with, he repeated in negro-English, "Ebryting hab tiger."

The birds and fishes, according to his explanation, had each its "tiger," or destroyer, all of which —even the mightiest overgrown snakes, from which other creatures fly—find their "tiger" in *man*, whose powers of destruction are greater than those of all.

It is interesting to converse with intelligent Indians, who are great observers, and to hear them describe the habits of animals, offensive and defensive, in the perpetual warfare of their native woods.

For though the shelter of those grand old forest glades seems so calm and peaceful, incessant war prevails there—no creature is safe.

The *monkeys* of various species, springing from tree to tree, seem to get on pretty well in the daytime; but night cometh, "wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth," and then ocelots and tiger-cats come upon them stealthily among the branches.

The *sloth* is more secure, perhaps, for he hangs by his claws, with his body *beneath* the branch, and can, by keeping near the end render it unsafe

for the ocelot to come too close to him. Yet the poor fellow is sometimes caught at a disadvantage. If he should come on or near the ground, he has no chance whatever, as he cannot run, nor even walk. And when he goes, as he often does, to the top of the highest tree, where he may sometimes be seen, clinging to the bare summit, and looking out like a sailor from the mast-head, he is there pounced upon by a species of eagle, called by the Arawâks "how-baridi," *sloth-hawk*, and borne away. So that, according to my friend Arriyan's proverb, the poor harmless sloth finds his "tiger," or destroyer, in the air, as well as on the ground, or among the branches.

The numerous and beautiful *birds* have, in those forests, so many enemies, that it seems wonderful how they can rear their young. Some species, indeed, make pendant nests, like large purses of woven grass; and others build under the protection of a nest of wasps, or *marabuntas*, with which they seem to have established a friendly alliance. But monkeys, opossums, and the coati-mondi, prowl along the branches, and assist the tiger-cats and ocelots in thinning their numbers. When one of those marauders gets at a nest, eggs, young, and parent birds are all devoured with equal appetite.

The favourite lurking-place of the ocelot is on some tree, whose branches fork at no great height from the ground. Here it will await the approach of any animal below, and keep an eye also on what may be moving among the trees above—lying so

flat and motionless that, but for its striped and spotted skin, it would seem a part of the branch to which it is clinging. But, when the moment comes for attack, it darts forward with great velocity, and, if baffled, retreats with equal swiftness.

I have, more than once, been enabled to have a close view of those beautiful and agile creatures in their wild and free condition.

In one of my early river voyages a very fine ocelot came to a landing-place to drink, just as my canoe approached the shore. Seeing us it did not drink. Neither would it quit the water-side, but seemed inclined to dispute our landing. First one boy and then another went forward, flourishing their paddles; but it mounted the trunk of a fallen tree, and bade them defiance. It was not till we had all landed that it bounded away.

On another occasion, a few years later, an ocelot came out from some low bush on the sea-coast, and stood in the centre of a path, as if inviting inspection. The sight of a lady's dress (for my wife was walking with me) was evidently something new, and seemed to excite its curiosity to the utmost. It stood gazing, as if fascinated, and allowed us to come very close upon it, ere it bounded back again to its covert.

What chiefly struck me on those occasions was the grace as well as the agility displayed in the movements of those animals, and the brilliant vivacity of their eyes.

One instance only have I known of a man being

attacked by one of those small "tigers." It was an unfortunate Acawoio, who fainted in the forest from sickness and exhaustion. An ocelot, as he told us afterward, then seized him by the head, tearing down his lower lip, and stripping off a large portion of his scalp. The pain revived him, and the animal retired. The sufferer was then found by some Christian Arawâks, who brought him to the nearest mission. There the magistrate, Mr. McClintock, who was fortunately on the spot, with my assistance, dressed his wounds, the stench from which was almost overpowering. His own countrymen were afraid to touch him till we had done so, believing him to be "Kanáima," that is, a devotee of the destroying spirit so called.

Kanáima is believed to enter men and animals, inspiring them to accomplish deeds of blood.

Amongst the inland tribes, when an Indian dies by the hand of another, or from supposed witchcraft, some sorcerer is called in to give a clue to the person or family who may have caused his death. *Life must pay for life.* Either the suspected murderer or some one of his kindred must be slain. So a strong and active relative of the deceased undertakes the office of avenger.

Separate from family and friends, and living only on certain kinds of bush food until the horrid vow be accomplished, as a devotee of Kanáima he roams the forest, never ceasing to track and hover unseen around the path or abode of his destined victim, until the fatal blow be given.

Kanáima also takes possession of a jaguar, which then, as a "Kanáima tiger," destroys mankind.

There is also another superstition amongst the native tribes, which closely resembles that of the *were-wolf* (or *loup-garou*) of Europe.

A wicked man, of cannibal propensities, devoting himself to Kanáima, has power to become a jaguar for a time, and, as such, can waylay and devour his enemy or any other victim. Some crafty piai-men, or sorcerers, acting on this superstition, have each a set of jaguar's claws suspended in his hut, which he is supposed to use with deadly effect, whenever he chooses to assume the nature and appearance of that animal.

Superstition, Satan's substitute for true religion, shows itself among the Guiana Indians chiefly by this dread of Kanáima, and of other spirits which cause bodily pain. These ideas our missionaries strive to overcome by teaching what Christ taught —the faith, fear, and love of the Father in heaven.

The *puma*, inferior to the jaguar in size and strength, does not seem to have part in the above superstition. It is as ravenous and destructive as any member of the cat family, but generally runs off at the sight of man; or, if brought to bay, jumps up into a tree, and there seeks to defend itself.

A young man whom I knew saw one of these animals run off at his approach, and being deceived by its colour took it for a "kwiarra," or forest deer. Calling to a black boy, who followed with his gun, to quicken his pace, he ran after it. The puma un-

deceived him by making a spring at him from the roots of a large tree; but a network of lianas intervening broke the leap, and he retreated to his covert. The gun was brought at that instant, and the animal shot in his lair.

Another instance of the puma being mistaken for a deer occurred within my own observation. As the canoe containing the bishop, myself, and eight paddlers was rounding a point on the Pomeroon, we came suddenly on one of those animals crossing the river. Our Arawâk crew cried "kwi-arra!" (*deer!*) and quickened their stroke. But the white muzzle and teeth soon undeceived them, as the puma turned round to show fight. Then, seeing our force, he swam with all his might towards shore; while our men, with wild cries, strove to cut him off. The chase was exciting, and had a very close finish; but the puma, who had had a long start, dashed up the bank just as we reached the aquatic plants which fringed it, and disappeared in the gloom of the forest.

The *black tiger* is most rare in our woods and savannahs; yet specimens are sometimes met with, and of great size. One such was shot in 1855 by an Acawoio chief with a spear-headed arrow, such as the Indians, by the aid of a file, shape out of old cutlasses.

"Hughes," the man who killed that fine animal, had fallen sick, and been confined to his hammock for years, when I showed him a sketch of that exploit, which I had made from his description.

He was delighted, and said it was just as the animal had received the fatal wound. Then, throwing himself on his back in his hammock, to show us how it struggled, he imitated the quivering of its limbs, and the sounds which in its dying agony it had uttered, bringing the scene before the minds of the bystanders with almost sickening reality.

The same power of mimic representation of the motions of wild animals, and of imitating the sounds they utter, I have seen in "France," the chief of the Isororo Caribs. That man, before he died, was called "tiger-killer," from the number he had slain. He lived in a district much infested with jaguars, and his countrymen said that if one crossed his path, he would go *right at it*, and cleave its skull with axe or cutlass, whichever he might have in his hand at the time.

I know not whether there be any mesmeric power of intimidation possessed by the eye of such men; but, from what I have heard, the animals always seemed paralyzed by his onslaught, and, though crouching as if to spring, never inflicted a wound.

I have known great spotted jaguars approach our missions in the daytime, and in the early morning have often seen, on the moist ground, the footmarks which they had imprinted as they prowled round our houses during the night. But our Christian Indians now mostly use guns, the sound of which warns those animals that they are

approaching dangerous ground, so that they are seldom seen.

Various instances of people having been killed and eaten have happened within my knowledge. The victims in two of these cases were full-grown men. One of them was surprised when sleeping; the other, having lost his way in the forest (where the tracks showed that a jaguar had persistently beset him), at last attempted to climb a tree as night came on. At the foot of that tree part of his mangled body was found next day by his anxious friends.

On cattle farms, and amidst the jungle which prevails at the back of sugar-estates on the sea-coast, those animals are more frequently found than in the forests near our missions. Goats, hogs, sheep, and cattle are often destroyed, and once I knew of a vigorous young bull, which had its shoulder-blade fractured, and the flesh torn off his back and sides. That laceration was occasioned by his having *scraped* off the jaguar by running under the branch of a tree.

I knew also an instance in which a heifer was taken from the small herd of a widow on the banks of the Tapacuma Lake. Her son-in-law and an Indian followed the track for nearly a mile through the forest next morning, and found the carcase partly devoured. Knowing well that the jaguar would be back in the evening for his second (and last) meal, they did what is usual in such cases—made a rude platform among the branches of a

neighbouring tree, and seated themselves on it to watch. Just before dark the jaguar came, and after performing a few feline antics, such as rearing up and dancing round his prey, expressive of delight at finding it all right, he settled down to his meal.

That was soon disturbed by the crack of a gun, and two bullets entered his loins. The fury of the beast, thus disabled, was described by the two men as terrible to witness. Unable to spring at the tree, his hind quarters being useless, he fell upon the dead heifer, dashed the carcase to and fro with his fore-paws, and literally tore it to pieces before he died.

The men did not fire again; the skin being a valuable one, which in point of size would have done credit to a royal Bengal tiger. The head and legs, unfortunately, got wet in curing, and had to be cut off. Still—suspended in the house of the elderly "lady of the lake" as a trophy—the length and breadth of the remaining portion showed her visitors what a formidable creature it had once clothed and adorned.

There is in those skins a great variety in depth of colour, and in the marking of the spots. In some the latter are comparatively few and faint, while in others the rosettes are very numerous, of the deepest black, and most beautiful.

The handsomest skin I ever saw was sold to me by an Arawâk chief, who bore the English name of Hubbard. With a brief account of him we will conclude this sketch.

I first saw him at a great "maquarri," or whip-dance, on the banks of the Koráia Lake. A woman had died there; and her husband, according to the custom of his nation, had a field planted with cassava, to do honour to her memory by a great festival, and by that dance, which becomes on such occasions a funeral game. After that celebration his connection with her family would be considered as ended.

The preparations for the maquarri take some time. The cassava roots are dug up by the women, and made into bread; which bread (having been toasted and *masticated*) is, by the addition of water, and by fermentation, made into paiwári. With that intoxicating drink a large canoe is filled. While the women are thus engaged, the men make the maquarri, or whips, from which the dance is named.

On the occasion here referred to, I arrived at the settlement, not knowing what was going forward, on the second day of the maquarri. The men were dancing in two parallel rows, from which they paired off continually, as challenges were given and received, to test each other's mettle alternately by cuts of the whip round the calf of the naked leg. These cuts sometimes fetch blood, and always occasion severe weals on the flesh. But all is carried on with much endurance and perfect good temper.

The dance I witnessed ended with a solemn procession of the men and boys round the house.

They then ranged themselves around the grave of the deceased woman; and one of their leaders delivered a short oration over it. This, which was interrupted from time to time by a loud chorus of moans by way of lamentation, completed the rites. They were followed by a scene of confusion and frantic excitement, as two men snatched the whips from the dancers, cut off the lashes, and then buried lashes, handles, and the refuse material (for all is considered sacred) in a pit dug for the purpose.

Other dances followed, in which females joined. Then evening came, the canoe was quite empty, and all sought repose.

To a stranger paiwári is rather disgusting than tempting, but it is the national beverage of the Indians, and they are very fond of it. Though this, their *beer*, be far less fatal to them than ardent spirits, excessive indulgence in it has destroyed many more of their race than all the "tigers" and reptiles in their native forests and swamps.

I was on that occasion an unexpected visitor, and, as a Christian teacher, scarcely welcome. But Hubbard, who was then a young man, and less intoxicated than the others, courteously invited me to hang my hammock in his house, and entertained me till I left the neighbourhood.

Some years after he left that lake, and became captain, or head-man, of the Arawâks who dwelt near the Moruca. In course of time he became a catechumen at Waramuri, and was baptized there.

When we were rebuilding that chapel, in 1864, Hubbard and his brother Jonas distinguished themselves by their offering. For the sills they brought four massive logs of the "baláta" (or bully-tree) timber, two of them being each more than sixty feet in length. To cut and square these was hard work for two men, who had only axe and cutlass, but to get them from the forest down to the water, and successfully float them to the mission, was still more difficult. Once there, however, all that was wanted was length and strength of bush-rope. For, like swarming ants, admiring men and boys of the various tribes crowded to lend a hand, and run them up the heavy sand-reef to the spot where they were needed. After this example we soon had timber enough brought for the building, and even some to spare.

In that same year the jaguar mentioned above came to Hubbard's house—not at night, but just after noonday. While the man was working in his field, he heard the cries of his wife and children (who were vainly trying to scare it away), and hurried to their rescue. Catching up his gun, which was loaded with small shot, and dropping into it a slug which providentially lay on the table, he rushed before his wife and children just as the jaguar was crouching to spring. "I fired from under my arm," said he, in describing the imminent peril, "for had I paused to take proper aim, 'Arua' would have been upon me."

The small shot, by increasing the rage of the

jaguar, would have probably ensured the death of the man; for they merely knocked off the hair, speckling the skin from head to tail; but the slug, taking a lower course, entered one of the eyes, and laid the animal dead.

The jaguar was a female, probably very hungry, and having young cubs requiring her care, which made her so persistent in her open onslaught on Hubbard's household. It was a case of unusual boldness—one into which the Kanáima superstition would probably have entered, had there been time to entertain it. But when the lives of their dear ones are suddenly in imminent peril, men do not think of hobgoblins.

What I have further to relate of this brave and well-meaning Indian I write with deep sorrow. The infamous seduction of his beautiful and favourite daughter, Rosetta, the pride of our mission school, by one of the men I had sent from the coast to build the chapel, set him off (like Goldsmith's vicar, if I may compare sad fact with beautiful fiction) to search for and bring her back. I tried to help him, but we had no success; for she had been carried to some vile place in Georgetown.

After a few months had passed by, the poor girl herself came back, in a most deplorable condition—to die moaning in her mother's arms! The father's heart was stricken through, and his head bowed in grief that never left him.

"Everything," according to the proverb of his countrymen, "has its tiger," or destroyer, and every

man has his deadly foe in his own besetting sin. There is no evil which overcomes the American Indian races like strong drink; especially the relish and craving for ardent spirits. It is a fact, which philosophers discuss and Christian missionaries deplore, that if Indians be induced to take spirits, they will scarcely stop while any of the liquor remains. Base men well know this weakness, and use it for their own bad ends.

A store for goods and provisions, with the inevitable rum-shop—great source of wealth and also of misery—was opened by a Portuguese squatter near the mouth of the Moruca, in a place which every Indian must pass in going to or from the sea. Poor Hubbard, sad and dispirited, visited this store for traffic in the usual Indian way, and being, like his countrymen, tempted to drink, was, soon after leaving the ill-omened place, drowned in the river, to the great sorrow of all who knew him.

About a year after his death, I learned that he had formed the design of enlarging the mission chapel, which had been found too small for our great gatherings. He had begun quietly to cut and square the necessary timbers. But Jose's grog-shop destroyed his plans and life together. It was a sad grief to lose such a man, and in such a way.

It is not for us to judge our living neighbours, and still less those who are departed, though we may be warned by their example. The voice of one Apostle says to us with solemn sound, "Be sober, be vigilant!"—while another says that "if a

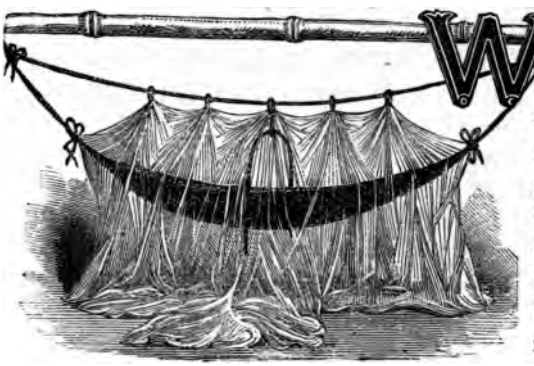
man be overtaken in a fault," even those who are spiritual, while seeking to restore him, should "*consider themselves*, lest they also be tempted."

Intemperance, the "tiger" which proved fatal to this poor Indian, as to many others, is, alas! not confined to his race alone. In Great Britain, and in many other lands, it destroys its tens of thousands. Weeping wives and widows, with their impoverished and starving families, deeply bewail the ravages of this most insidious, powerful, and deadly "Kanáima."

## IX.

## INSECT ANNOYANCES.

Mosquitoes — Marabuntas — Chigoes, etc. — The lion-ant — Wood-ants—Coushies—Hunting-ants—Waracuderos—Privations of Mission teachers.



WE have in Guiana, as in other tropical regions, insects of great beauty. While roaming through the woods and savannahs in the daytime, you see butterflies magnificent in size and brilliancy of colours, and smaller insects which glitter like jewels in the sun; and when night comes on "the firefly lights his lamp of love," flashing and twinkling in all the groves around.

But there are also many others which have little beauty to recommend them. There are centipedes and scorpions, which may get into your clothes or bed, and inflict venomous bites or stings, though it is of comparatively rare occurrence that any one is injured by them. Marabuntas, cockroaches, and ants beset you more, though individually their power of harming you is less. But as regards the aggregate amount of misery and annoyance actually inflicted on the human race, they and all other insects must, I conceive, yield the palm to one of the feeblest—the mosquito.

The first effect of the mosquito-bite on new-comers is generally seen in small blisters on face, hands, and ankles. If these be scratched or rubbed off, painful ulcers may ensue. In a few days that effect of their bites ceases.

In the city, and in well-drained and cultivated districts, these insects are few. But where there is much stagnant water their immense numbers make them a real plague during a great portion of the year. In some parts of Berbice I have seen horse-men with their heads and hats enveloped in bags of white net, and people going to Divine service with "tails" of horse-hair attached to handles, to whisk off their tormentors. But unfortunately I had no need to go so far to find out what a terrible plague mosquitoes are.

Humboldt heard the missionary monk at the Cataracts of the Orinoco vaunting the superiority of the mosquitoes which bit him over those which

attacked his brother missionary on the Cassiquiare. The insects of the lower district of the Pomeroon might, I am sure, enter the lists with either without fear of being beaten.

The kind most dreaded there is the "gally-nipper." That word is probably a negro corruption of *jolly*-nipper, which may be correct as far as the insects are concerned, for they certainly seem "jolly" enough. Not so their victims. He who would make trial of their powers should, at the end of the midsummer rainy season, visit our mission at Hackney, and spend a week there, if he can hold out so long.

In such a district, and at such a time, you, if you are an old traveller, will see your hammock properly enveloped in its curtain by 4 p.m. Your work being done for the day, and your frugal meal despatched, you may take a walk on the banks of the little canal, and perhaps visit the spot where the camudi snake and alligator each fought for life and the power of breakfasting on his antagonist, as mentioned in the next chapter.

You do not expect mosquitoes for nearly an hour? Fond delusion! Suddenly your ear detects a sound like the very distant singing of an immense multitude. Can it be?—at this hour, when the sun is only beclouded, but not nearly set? You know that sound, alas! too well; the gally-nippers are mustering in force all around.

From river, trench, and drain—from forest, bush, and brake—from mangrove swamp and stagnant

pool—they come! and the feeblest insect in that host is prepared to carry off a drop of your blood. The countless vibrations of their innumerable wings give forth that musical song-like note, to the sound of which they will charge like the Norman chivalry at Hastings.

A clear ringing note at your ear, and a sharp puncture in the cheek, show you that the Taillefer of the invading host has commenced the attack, and planted his weapon in your flesh. You kill him forthwith, brush away a few scores of his followers, and then, enveloped in a small cloud of hovering insects, hasten to the house. Ere you reach it you see a thick white smoke arise from burning bush and grass. But your Indians have been too late in making their smoke; the whole building is already full of mosquitoes, even their sleeping-room, which should have been closely shut up before. In dismay the poor fellows ask permission to take the mission boat, and pull down to the sea to sleep in her there. They have paddled you thirty miles since morning, and are now willing to go ten or twelve miles farther, and the same distance back, to escape the intolerable insects. You have your hammock curtain, or would go with them.

If you would not experience sensations suggestive of being flayed alive, your ablutions must be somewhat limited. You dare not light a candle, as that would attract every mosquito near the house. So you close doors and windows, and grope your

way into your hammock as well as you can. The curtain which envelopes it, and protects you, has, if its fittings be complete, half a hoop, or a bent stick, suspended inside, which is intended to keep it from touching you. You enter through a funnel-like aperture at the bottom, which afterwards lies flat on the floor, and so baffles all but the enterprising few, who *somehow will* manage to get in with you. With them you will have plenty of time to wage war, for it is your doom to swelter in those close quarters for nearly twelve hours—until morning.

Meanwhile the enemy without keeps up the incessant war-note, the loudness of which falls painfully on the ear in the stillness of night, and shows how numerous they are. All seem to be, and really are, crowding around you. Were a person with a light to enter suddenly, your white curtain would appear to him blackened by those who are sitting on it, and hazy with the multitude on the wing. Woe unto you if there be in it the smallest hole; if *one* can squeeze through, they will come in by scores! As it is, you awake from time to time to find your hands and elbows sore and inflamed, for in your heated and restless sleep you have placed them against the curtain, and instantly as many as could get room pierced your flesh through it.

There is a little lull in the sound about midnight, as if the enemy were resting their wings, but towards morning they become as busy as ever. It is only when the sun has arisen, dazzling them with

his strong light, that you can rise and walk about with any degree of comfort or freedom.

Your Indian crew return in the morning, looking weary and worn. You see at once that they have not slept, and ask the reason. "We went," they say, "to the river's mouth, and on to the sea; but there was no breeze, and the *sand-flies*" (another terrible plague) "devoured us." Their extra pull of more than twenty miles has failed in procuring rest and sleep.

Such was the case with my poor fellows in August, 1873, one of the worst mosquito seasons ever known. And in the above sketch there is no exaggeration, as those who at such times have been exposed to the gally-nippers in their strength well know.

They are not, however, so terrible there always. There are times when you may sleep without even a curtain. But they are usually bad enough, and at their *seasons* give the inhabitants no rest day nor night. The hardiest negroes sleep in curtains then, for a curtain or a good sea-breeze, one or other, is indispensable against those blood-suckers.

The Bishop of Guiana and Archdeacon Jones have, in their visitations, often gone through what I have here endeavoured to describe. The latter, about eight o'clock one morning, called my attention to his boots. He had been trying to write, with little success; and the gally-nippers, brushed down from face and hands, had settled on his feet so thickly that each boot looked as if it were

covered with patches of grey fur. That appearance arose from the wings of the insects, which are of a grey colour. The extremities of the hind legs are also of a silvery white, and are held up in the air, as if to throw all the weight of the tiny body on the proboscis. With that weapon, so sharp and slender, they will try even to bore through leather if they scent human blood beneath, and perseveringly continue, though all their efforts be in vain.

The gally-nippers care less for smoke than other mosquitoes, and will continue their attacks by day as well as by night. You can test this by seating yourself in the full light of the morning sun. If you have on dark clothing, there are sure to be some about you, and you will see that though the strong light dazzles them, it does not in the least abate their thirst for blood. In their half-blinded state they blunder and tumble up and down your clothes, but are always trying to pierce through them.

One has just found your hand; he settles on it and is happy. You hold it up against the clear light, to observe his operations. You see the slender abdomen swell and redden as it fills with blood; and as if the whole system were invigorated by the delicious draught, his proboscis is driven deeper and deeper into your flesh. As he flies away he sinks to earth—overweighted, and perhaps feeling ill from his surfeit.

Others then settle in a group on your hand. But your curiosity is by this time satisfied, and you

disturb them with a tap, which knocks over three or four. Two of them are so fast anchored that they hang dead from your hand. You shake one off; the other you have to remove with your finger.

In doing so you see that one of those you have knocked off has settled on your other hand. Although he be an enemy, who, following the instincts of mosquito nature, stabbed you as deeply as he could, you are still sorry for him, because in the overthrow he has lost one of his long hind legs, and, apparently in pain, keeps moving round and round. But ere you give the *coup de grâce*, pause for a few seconds and look more closely. You will see that, though mutilated, he no sooner alighted there than he put his body at the gally-nipper's angle (of forty-five) to strike his proboscis again into your flesh. There it is now, and that is the central point around which he is turning. Those circular movements are only caused by his efforts to stand steady at his work. The one hind leg he still possesses, having lost its fellow, keeps pushing him on one side, and so he goes round and round. But his object is still *your blood*, and whether he lose leg or life, have it he will. What resolute warrior of human race could do more?

There are several other kinds of mosquitoes. Two are very common there, and great pests in their way, though not to be compared with those above described. One is small and soft-bodied; its hind legs are dotted with minute white spots; its bite is not very sharp, but occasions a good deal

of irritation afterwards. The other is the "big black bush" mosquito. It has very long legs, is somewhat hard and rough to the touch, and stupid. You may sometimes kill five or six with one slap of the hand. Some have small tufts on the joints of the legs, and, as they dance in the air before you, appear both spruce and formidable, though, in point of prowess and the pain they inflict, they and the other kinds are far inferior to the gally-nippers.

Less terrible than the mosquitoes, though individually far more formidable, are the *marabuntas*, which greatly infest that district. The stings of those wasps are very severe, and the manner in which their wing-cases are held high up from the abdomen, even when the insects are at rest, is significant of their constant readiness to use those stings either in attack or defence. They enter houses, and give the inhabitants no end of trouble in destroying the nests they build. But with care and diligence they may be kept under, which mosquitoes cannot be where there is much undrained land in the neighbourhood, and especially where salt water mingles with fresh.

One wonders how the poor inhabitants of such a district manage to endure life! Certainly they are used to those insects, which is a great point; and in other respects it is a goodly land, yielding abundance of the nutritious plantain and other vegetable food. There are also fish and crabs in great plenty, diet on which the negroes thrive. And the air is as good, I believe, as can anywhere

be found, being usually the sea-breeze, the pure trade-wind from the Atlantic. These are, in some degree, compensations.

But the aboriginal Indians, more sensitive in their physical organization than the African race, detest the spot, and though they have never refused to accompany me thither on duty, they have always been rejoiced to get away again. It matters little that they have several hours of night-work before them, and five miles of sea to cross before they can reach the next mission station; cheerily and swiftly they urge the boat forward, and toss the water high into the air from the blades of their paddles, for are they not leaving the mosquitoes behind?

Arrived at the next station, Waramuri, which is on a high reef of white sand, you find few mosquitoes, but sometimes hear many complaints of the chigoes. For two or three months in 1873 they were so numerous around the school that the teacher set his little Indians to fetch water daily, and throw it all about the place, to keep them down.

Now, the chigo (*chegoe*, or, as it is commonly called, "*jigger*") resembles a small flea—so very small, indeed, that you can hardly see it on your skin. Bare feet it is sure to attack, and it will also get into your shoe and through your stocking. In half an hour it has buried itself beneath your skin. Perhaps, if you are very busy, you do not notice it for a day or two, when you begin to feel a slight pain and itching. The intruder must be got out;

and if the globule of a nest which it has formed be not larger than a pin's head, you may do it easily with the point of a penknife. If it be bigger, approaching the size of a pea, you must get some person with good eyes and delicate touch (a young Indian girl is the best operator) to remove the skin with the point of a needle, and try to extract the nest entire with the chigo in it. Should it burst, which when large it is very likely to do, you will have much pain and trouble, as the insect burrows as fast as an effort is made to impale, or rake it out. The bleeding of the lacerated flesh rather embarrasses it, and sometimes it is washed out by the blood; but whether that be the case or not, *out it must come*, for if it remain and breed, you will soon find there a spreading mass of chigoes, and be like that unfortunate monk who in the interest of science endeavoured to carry one alive in his foot during a voyage to Europe, and lost his life thereby.

Waterton has described the chigo, and says that he has extracted from his own feet as many as four nests in one day. When Sir R. Schomburgk came from the Warau county to the Pomeroon, he had as many as sixty in his feet, as I was informed by one who superintended their extraction. He had been sleeping for some nights in semi-abandoned Warau settlements, where they are always most numerous. I cannot pretend to equal in that respect either the author of the amusing "Wanderings," or the scientific traveller, yet my personal

acquaintance with those insects has been quite as extensive as a moderate man need desire.

The first of those insects which attacked me made a nest of enormous size; for, though it pained and distressed me, I, being a stranger, was perfectly ignorant of its nature, and took it for a mosquito blain. But when it looked like a large purple pea embedded beneath the skin, and the pain became more severe, my faithful old African enlightened me as to its nature. Exerting all her skill in the operation, she took it out entire. Then fetching her short pipe, and filling the wound with the tobacco ashes, she said triumphantly, "Massa all right now!" I thought it all *secundum artem*, and let her do as she pleased. Turpentine is put in by some, for the purpose of cleansing the sore and destroying any eggs which may remain there if the nest be broken.[1]

You do not think much of chigoes, however, as you walk on the white sandy plain which forms the *Campus Martius* of Waramuri Mission. Your attention is rather drawn to other forms of insect

[1] The laceration and pain occasioned by the ordinary method of *digging out* an obstinate chigo, when his nest is broken, may be in a great measure avoided by placing a drop of oil (any ordinary oil will do) on the spot and letting it penetrate to the insect; the skin of course being removed, and its bag opened. As the oil touches the chigo, it becomes disabled and will die. You have then no further trouble, and may sometimes remove it at once with the oil, or allow it to come away in a day or two in the little scab which nature forms. I have tried this and seen it tried in others, and never knew a chigo survive contact with the oil.

life. If there be no wind, very small flies get into your eyes, ears, and nostrils. As you look on the sand, from which the grass has been cleared, you see many greenish spotted flies, about an inch in length, digging away with their strong fore-feet, and comically throwing it out in showers between their wide-spread hinder ones. They surpass even the British navvy in rapidity and energy of movement, and work away as if the very existence of their race depended on it. Perhaps it does.

There are also other tiny jets of very fine sand or dust, though comparatively few and less conspicuous than those of the busy flies. At first you see not what causes them, but as you look more closely you may observe certain small craters, of about two inches diameter at the top. You see a small ant run heedlessly into one and immediately struggle in terror up the side, while the lion-ant, concealed in the bottom, throws up shower after shower in rapid succession, to overwhelm and bring it down. But that ant is nimble and strong, makes desperate exertions, and escapes. The poor insect which tumbles into the next pitfall is not so fortunate. The first jet of sand lights on his head, and brings him to the bottom. You see him for a few seconds struggling with the lion there, but he is soon drawn beneath the loose sand, and you know that all is over with him.

I have sometimes dug out the little crater, to have a look at its sturdy inhabitant, which, I have been told, is the larva of some insect. Certainly

it does not in appearance at all resemble an ant. There does not seem to be more than one in each hole. As you look at the singular abode of that apparently solitary creature, you wonder whether Leo ever comes out for a walk, or if he visits his fellows by passages under ground.[1]

There seems to be no end of the numerous species of ants around you. Of all kinds, the wood-ants are the most destructive. One sort is easily detected by its external covered ways,—passages with arched roofs, constructed with wonderful skill against posts, beams, or boards. Those covered ways guide you to their nest. A little arsenic put into it destroys the whole community, as those who eat the poison are devoured by the rest until all are dead. Calomel is less dangerous to use, and will have the same effect.

But the kind which is called the "*ground* wood-

[1] Since the above was written, the Indians at Waramuri brought me half a dozen specimens, alive and vigorous, in their native sand, that I might see how they moved about. They all went *backwards*. Their organs of locomotion, placed beneath, are very small and slender; but each has hair-like limbs, which extend conspicuously from the sides like a pair of oars, and with these it jerks or *rows* itself over a hard surface. We put them on white paper, which they traversed in every direction, frequently getting foul of each other, but always going *backwards*. A bystander then took two or three and put them on the crown of a felt hat; the rough surface seemed to embarrass them at first, but they soon recommenced their jerky retrograde movements, tumbling from the crown on to the brim of the hat, and thence down to the sandy soil, in which they disappeared with such celerity, that they seemed not to burrow, but sink themselves sideways beneath the welcome surface.

ant" (because its nest is in the ground) is a more deadly because secret foe. These will destroy your dwelling, and yet give no sign of their presence. They will work an invisible path up between the bricks of a pillar or through the cracks in a hard-wood block, and then, commencing on the softer boards, they eat out all the inside, leaving but the empty shell as a protection to themselves. Destroying as fast as we have built, these terrible vermin have put us to enormous expense and trouble in our determination to maintain, by God's help, our mission here.

As we walk along we see the Waramuri ants, which have given this place its name. They inhabit decaying wood, but are not very destructive, though, like most other ants, their odour is not pleasant.—Yonder go the red coushies, destructive to garden and field. They are burdened with strips of leaves, newly nipped from some fruit tree, which they will soon leave bare. How free from obstacles they have swept their side of the path we tread! But while observing them as they enter their holes in the low and wide mound which marks their underground habitation, do not heedlessly place your feet on that small soft hillock over against it. From it will issue myriads of small red ants, which will cover your ankles, run up your legs, and inflict on you as many burning bites as your fortitude can well bear.

The most terrible species of biting ants is the muneeri, but that is not near us now.

One does not mind ants out-of-doors. It is only when they enter your houses that they become a real nuisance; even the jagman, or *yakman* (as the Creole negroes call the warrior or hunting ant), being such for the time, though his visits are most beneficial in their effects. Those ants take over the whole or part of your house. They will not bite you if you do not molest them nor obstruct their operations, but they clear out and devour every centipede, scorpion, cockroach, etc., within that part of the building they have marked for their day's work. They overhaul the nests which the marabuntas have built under your floors, eaves, or galleries, and devour their young. The old ones fly everywhere, wild with rage at this onslaught, and will sting you savagely if you then come in their way.

I know nothing more beautiful and perfect in the habits of insects than the military order and discipline maintained in all the marches and operations of those invincible warrior-ants.

In an open Caribi house I was sitting one afternoon reading, being quite alone, for we had found no inhabitants there, and I had sent my Arawâk crew in various directions to search for them. A sharp bite caused me to look at the assailant. It was a "yakman" which had given my ankle a nip, just to see what it was made of. A score of his comrades were running up my legs, and I had to hasten out of the house, which was by that time alive with them, and brush them off. This was effected with little damage, and I had then a fine

opportunity of observing the tactics of this predatory horde. One immense column came through the forest, marching on the ground and winding its way around the roots of the trees. The captains, whose heads and forceps are twice as big as those of the rank and file, were marching at intervals alongside the column and directing their operations. Just as the column approached the house it divided into three; one came round on the right flank, another on the left, while the main attack, which had driven me out, was from the centre. No insect without wings could escape them. Even those able to fly, as the great South American cockroach, seemed paralyzed with fear, and, trying to hide themselves, were caught under the troolie thatch. Down they fell, covered with ants; and hundreds more on the ground threw themselves upon them, until they were completely hidden by a living mass. Resistance ceased, and the work of cutting up and dragging off commenced. In two hours the ants had cleared out the whole building. It was then about four o'clock, when, as if by some recognized signal, they gathered again into three columns, falling by the same routes into one main body, which continued its long winding march through the woods.

When they rest for the night, they cling together in an immense cluster. I have seen them in the corner of a room where I had to sleep, reaching from the floor nearly to the ceiling, and from one to two feet thick. In the midst of these living

masses are their eggs, or pupæ, which they most carefully guard from cold and damp, and which are hatched there.

Numerous species of ants, mostly very small, have their permanent abode in your dwelling. They attack your sugar and everything which is eatable, and drive the good housewife to her wits' end in guarding against their depredations. Other kinds are larger, and give serious annoyance.

There was at Cábacabùri Mission a little building with thatched roof and sides, which I got Cornelius, the warden, to erect as a sleeping chamber for the visiting missionary. I named it the "Shunamite's chamber," as it was furnished with table, chair, and candlestick, though (as travellers bring their hammocks) there was no bed. But the Indians, finding that word a hard one, called it "the Bishop's room," from its most worthy occasional occupant. Many times had I slept there in peace; but one night, while preparing for rest after a fatiguing voyage, I saw a multitude of large black-looking ants coming up through the floor and running in every direction. They were so numerous and bold that I called for assistance, and a black servant girl and some Indian boys came to help me dislodge them. "What ants are these?" I asked. "Wáracudèros," was the reply; "the flesh-eating ants. If you have any meat here they will never rest till they have devoured it."—My provision box was immediately locked and made, as I thought, secure.

Having, in the hut I first lived in, had a pretty good initiation, and many years' subsequent experience of life in the bush, I thought I knew all the vermin which enter houses there. But though I might have met this kind of insect before, I certainly up to that moment had no idea that it was a household foe, with the high-sounding title of "wáracudèro," or "flesh-eating ant."

There was no necessity to ask if they *bit* people, for we had practical proof that they did. To be sure, it was in self-defence, for we were slaughtering them at a prodigious rate. My assistants, crushing them with their feet, were jumping about like goblins in the light of the solitary candle, and one boy, entering enthusiastically into the spirit of the contest, had thrown himself on his knees, and was crushing them all round with heavy slaps of his hands. So the ants had to quit the floor with heavy loss, and I bade my victorious assistants good night.

The latter were no sooner gone than out swarmed the ants again. It was useless to go on alone killing them. The only course left was to get into the hammock with as little damage as possible, and try to sleep.

Over-fatigue under a vertical sun is very apt to be followed by restless nights. And if, as you begin to doze, you chance to remember a horrible story, heard in boyhood, of an unfortunate sick missionary in Africa being eaten alive by ants, and the last sound in your ears is caused by flesh-

eating wáracudèros rustling in the thatch all around you, it is not surprising if you dream that the devouring process is being repeated on your own person. A stupid cockroach flies against the hammock, or a bat flutters his wings over your face, and you start up in a vague fancy that you are being attacked in some way,—that perhaps a column of "flesh-eaters," resolute and vengeful, is descending each hammock-rope to eat your flesh forthwith. But you soon find that all is right as far as your person is concerned, and that you may sleep—or dream—on still.

As soon as there was sufficient daylight, I arose and examined my provision box. Alas! its inside was swarming with wáracudèros. One of its hinges was a little loose, and, entering through that chink, they had destroyed or defiled all they could. A dressing-case, which had been unfortunately left open, they had made a nest of; every possible place in it was crammed full of their mummy-like eggs. Other packages also were swarming with them. They evidently liked the Shunamite's chamber, and, considering my baggage very convenient for their young, had made up their minds to occupy it and dwell there.

Help had again to be summoned, and the work of slaughter commenced anew, aided by streams of hot water poured into every nook and cranny, till few survived.

Soon after this adventure I had a new floor laid down, which gave us a great strategical advantage

in future contests. For though the ants could run on it more swiftly than before, they could not hide, as in the chinks and holes of the decaying old one. Finally, and chiefly by the use of boiling water, the nuisance was abated. But they still make their appearance from time to time, and whoever has to take up his quarters in any future Shunamite's chamber on Cabacaburi Hill will do well at night to give a glance round, just to see if it be free from the wáracudèros, or "flesh-eating ants."

The above sketch of insect annoyances at my three mission stations, grouped as it were together, and considered as a whole, appears, I must confess, somewhat formidable; and if you were to be assailed by the whole at once, there would doubtless soon be an end. But that does not happen. As I have said, in towns and large villages, and on well-drained and cultivated estates, the colonists are comparatively little disturbed by those insects. And in the out-stations, where you must meet with them, you seldom have more than one or two kinds at a time, and they are easily borne or remedied, *always excepting the mosquitoes.* These latter are indeed a most serious evil. They were often very bad at my own residence, but so much worse at the station I have described that I never could leave it without feeling that the poor catechist resident there had to suffer more from them in a month than I in a year.

Yet men, even Europeans, not bred to it from infancy, have endured it bravely and for long

periods of service. Mr. D. Campbell, already mentioned, was catechist there from 1843 till 1858, when he was removed to Waramuri. After twelve years' labour at the latter station his health gave way from over-exertion in building, with Indian aid, a new mission-house. To that heavy labour was added serious exposure. I had freighted a schooner with several thousand feet of boards for that house, to be taken from Georgetown to the mouth of the Moruca. Mr. Campbell went down that river with an Indian flotilla to receive them on the appointed day, but the vessel did not arrive.

The sea had washed away the whole of the former sandy shore, and there was not a place to make a camp. So the poor teacher and his Indians had to cut down branches and make a platform under the damp mangrove trees and on their spreading roots. On this he had to wait three days. As the wind dropped with the falling tide, his old enemies, the mosquitoes, devoured him ; and when it rose with the flood, it blew chill and cold through the funnel-like opening, the mouth of the river. The waves dashed every night under their hammocks, and the spray flew all about them. Still he stuck to his post, lest the Church should suffer loss ; knowing well that if he were not there to receive the boards the negro sailors would throw them anywhere among the mangroves, that the tide would then carry them away, and that there were no funds to replace them.

At length the vessel arrived, and he got the

lumber safe to the mission. But he had caught a severe illness, ending in his death. After protracted suffering he died in Georgetown, and was borne to his grave by the clergy of that city, who deeply respected his long service, piety, and self-devotion. He had laboured with me in all twenty-eight years.

While the Church honours, as she should, the bishops and clergy who risk health and life in her world-wide mission-field, let not the work and sufferings of their humble lay helpers be overlooked. They are not forgotten in heaven.

## X.

## INTERRUPTIONS OF MISSION SERVICES.

Disturbances occasioned by insects or reptiles—Fight between a snake and alligator—Their respective habits—"The first coil does the mischief."

INTERRUPTIONS of Divine service were, as might have been expected, rather frequent with our wild and uncivilized congregations. Sometimes they arose from the uncouth behaviour of the people, but not often; for the Indian, unless intoxicated, behaves with decency. Those which proceed from the presence of objectionable insects or reptiles are much more frequent.

Of course our small mission chapels, or chapel-schools, especially when they have been shut up for a time, are very liable to be infested by these unwelcome intruders, and their presence is often not detected until Divine service has commenced. Then, when all is outwardly reverence and devotion, a commotion suddenly arises. A *bush centipede*—a black-looking forty-legged creature, from seven to nine inches in length, and armed with forceps of

"burning bite," is discovered crawling up the clothes of some one of the congregation. That individual forthwith knocks or shakes him off—generally on to some one else. I have seen a centipede running thus over the shoulders of two or three women in succession; turning his head savagely from side to side to bite in self-defence, until he is knocked off the last person on to the floor, and there crushed.

The cause of disturbance may, however, be a *scorpion*, which is more venomous, and, being smaller, less easily detected. Of these we have two well-known kinds, one white and flat-bodied, common to old houses; and the other larger, black, and round—the bush scorpion, whose bite is most dangerous.

There are several kinds of spiders whose bite is hurtful, but they seldom disturb our services. Wasps or *marabuntas* of various kinds are more annoying. There are many different species. There is the common marabunta; the "Quaco"—a pure negro, as his name implies; the more showy "Jack Spaniard," in shining black and gold; the "bell-bee," and "mason-bee" (which build cells for their young of mud or clay), and various other species, alike in shape and sting, but differing in colour and habits.

Perhaps one of these insects has built a conical cell of clay in some snug corner, under the edge of your reading-desk or the Lord's Table, and quite out of sight. You see her come hovering up to you, bearing between her legs a small green cater-

pillar, or a spider, which she intends to place in her cell as food for her future young. Your position, as officiating minister, now becomes unpleasant. Dancing in the air, up and down, in front, behind, and around you, she does her best to make you understand that your presence there interferes with her maternal duties; that you are an intruder, in fact, and must withdraw; if not, her long, pointed body has a very sharp sting, of which you had better beware. Perhaps, as a last hint, she dashes at your face or ear, and you are forced to aim a stroke at her with hand or handkerchief. The result is generally this: she drops the caterpillar at your feet, flies off through the open window, and in ten minutes is back with another, and as importunate as before.

Occasionally a bewildered *bat*, blinded with the sunlight, flies about the heads of the congregation, and blunders into every place he ought not; but the only harm he does is by distracting attention. After a few score of gyrations, he usually gets into some dark corner, hooks himself up, and remains suspended, blinking his eyes curiously, and curling up his flexible nose, with its surmounting membrane, at the congregation. A bat, unless he happen to be of the large vampire species, is little regarded.

*Snakes*, of course, are more formidable intruders than any of the creatures above mentioned. Some years ago, a brother clergyman, on entering his pulpit (one of the old box fashion, intolerable in a hot climate, and now generally disused), was sur-

prised and alarmed to find a labária coiled up therein. Of course he had to retreat with all speed, esteeming it a providential mercy that he had caught sight of it in time, the bite of the labária being most agonizing and deadly.

I did not myself witness this last incident, but have seen, more than once or twice, congregations of our aboriginal Indians thrown into a panic by the sudden appearance of a snake among them. Their women do not scream, nor faint, but catch up their children and rush away as fast as they can, frequently overturning and falling over each other. The men and boys are engaged in attacking and killing the snake, impeding each other in their eagerness. Every available piece of wood is caught at, and used as a weapon; neither hat, cap, shoe, nor book will be spared, if needed as a missile; the snake, enraged and desperate, flies wriggling from one part of the chapel to another, partially protected by the benches he passes under, on which, by the time he is killed, half the congregation are mounted and standing. It is long before the confusion subsides, as the event, being considered an important one, is discussed in every language (sometimes four or five) spoken by the assembled people.

Sometimes the intruder is of a venomous and deadly kind; at other times he may be perfectly harmless, one of the pretty olive-green species, which enter buildings in quest of vermin. But his harmlessness makes no difference. He may have

as little venom as a dove; but, being a *snake*, he must be killed first, and his qualities, good or bad, discussed afterwards.

I was once officiating at Waramuri Mission chapel when a snake crept up through a chink in the floor among some women and children. He would have retired immediately from so much company, but, getting confused, could not find the hole by which he had entered. The scene that ensued was just as I have described above, with the addition, that a part of the flooring gave way, and precipitated a few persons on to the sand beneath. The outcry was prodigious, for they thought the snake was upon them; but no one was seriously hurt. That snake was very slender, and of a bright yellow colour. I had never seen one like it, and when I asked its name, none could tell me. At last an old Indian said that his parents had shown him a specimen long ago, and called it "Sarri-sarri." From this, by no means an isolated instance, one may judge how numerous are the species of snakes which infest Guiana, where you meet, from time to time, with specimens whose names are unknown to Indians who have lived all their lives in the country.

On the 25th of March, 1873, Divine service at one of my stations was kept back by an unusual incident. The chapel is on a small cultivated piece of land near the river Pomeroon; and a canal to carry off the drainage is within a few yards of the building.

The congregation, of various races, mostly blacks,

had assembled; and I was just quitting the vestry to commence service, when there arose a great commotion, and every man and boy began to hurry out of the chapel towards the canal. When I asked the reason, one of the wardens told me that a desperate fight was going on in the water between a large camùdi (the water-boa) and an ant-eater.

It was utterly impossible to perform Divine service, as the males were all in a state of excitement outside, and the females left in the chapel were looking on at the contest from the windows, and almost equally excited.

I soon found that the snake, about twelve feet long, was struggling with an alligator on the surface of the water: not a cayman, which species grows to the length of twelve feet and more, but one of the smaller kind, which is not more than half the length, though savage and destructive. The tail of this species has a double serrated ridge; which, as it rose and sunk in the water during the struggle, was at first mistaken for the stiff mane of the large ant-bear.[1]

[1] "Myrmecophaga jubata." Both this and the smaller ant-eater take the water, and swim across our large rivers. The large bushy tail is held erect, and looks like the feathery branch of a tree, held as a sail above wafer. I once came on one of the smaller kind thus voyaging, which my Indians captured and ate. Dreading its claws, which, once fastened on a foe, never quit their hold, they killed it in the water. While thus swimming they are liable to be taken by other rapacious creatures than man—snakes, alligators, and large fishes.

No one saw the beginning of the fight. But both snake and alligator had been preying, for a week or two, upon a number of fine Muscovy ducks belonging to the schoolmaster. Only one or two of these were now left, and, as they had become very shy and difficult to capture, the camùdi, it seemed, had resolved to appease his appetite by swallowing the alligator instead.

In travels extending over many years, I have had various opportunities of observing the camùdis, and studying the tactics of these beautiful, subtle, and rapacious creatures, when on the look-out for prey. Sometimes you may see them coiled on wide-spreading roots, or on a strong branch overhanging the river. The dark spots on their glossy yellow skins look like the shadows of leaves in the golden sunlight, as they lie there—motionless as death, but most watchful, and ready to launch themselves with unerring aim on any creature that passes beneath.

At other times, pressed by hunger, they immerse themselves in the waters of the lakes or rivers.

If a strong current be running, the camùdi seeks the protection of some fallen tree; sheltered by which it lies on the edge of the swirling eddies, with its head towards the middle of the stream.

Where there is little or no current I have seen the camùdi moving along in the most stealthy manner, a few yards from the bank. The head only, and a small portion of the body near the tail, are allowed to touch the surface of the still water. The head looks like a floating seed or seed-pod,

and that small part of the glossy back that is visible looks like a film or scum on the water. No one would think that a snake of ten, fifteen, or twenty feet, was there. Imperceptibly it glides onward. The head slowly advances, as if moved by the breeze or a slight current; then it remains stationary, and the filmy object draws gradually nearer to it. This process is repeated without apparent effort or attracting attention, until some victim be near enough to be reached with a single spring; when the head flies forward and seizes, and the tail is at the same instant whirled round it.

It was doubtless in this way that the camùdi surprised the alligator, which, when watching for its prey, keeps its eyes and the tip of its snout only on a level with the surface of the water, but does not see so well what is behind as above, or in front.

Having thrown itself on its intended victim, and got a coil round its body, the camùdi's next efforts were directed to keep its own head and neck from the alligator's jaws, as a crushing grip from those jagged teeth would have decided the battle. A simple move effected this. It passed its head round the thick part of the alligator's tail, and its own tail round the alligator's neck. When this last move was accomplished it virtually settled the contest. The captive might struggle violently, but escape was hopeless; and as the folds were drawn tighter, all power, even of motion, was at length taken away. The rugged, mail-clad reptile—its teeth and

claws quite useless—lay like a log on the surface of the water; with two central folds of the camùdi around its body, two others round its neck, and two holding its tail with vice-like grasp. Three legs were also enveloped; and the fourth, a fore-leg, with outspread claw, was at last held up above water, as if appealing to us for help. "A signal of

distress," the bystanders called it, but of course none offered assistance.

The camùdi, who, when his antagonist ceased to struggle, had brought his head round and pressed it tightly on the central folds, seemed instinctively aware that one limb, though useless, was still free. Tightening his grasp, he got about a foot of tail to

spare. We saw this slowly rise above the surface, grope for and hook round the outstretched claw, drawing it down. Then all was quiet. The tail of the alligator was raised out of the water, and the head kept under, as if to drown it.

I now proposed to leave the scene of action and return to the chapel, as it was quite certain that the snake—which had been perfectly indifferent to the presence and clamour of more than one hundred people—would not quit its victim willingly until he had swallowed it. But the schoolmaster, whose daughter had been attacked by a camùdi sóme years before while bathing, was anxious to have the snake shot at once. I suggested that the alligator might escape, but the general opinion was that it was dead already. "Its sides are all crushed in," was the remark, and guns were sent for. During this further delay I sketched the position of the reptiles.

The first gun had no charge; the second was loaded, but missed fire, and there was no other cap. Caps were at length brought, and one of the young men, a good marksman, took aim and fired.

The snake, riddled through and through, cast himself convulsively off his victim, and sank writhing to the bottom. The alligator gave a parting blow with its tail, and, glad to be released from that too close embrace, darted off down the canal towards the river.

My assembled flock looked rather blank at the escape of the latter; and as there was nothing

more to be seen, followed me into the chapel. After a reasonable pause, to allow the excitement to calm down, we at length began Divine service.

It seemed, however, that there was to be another interruption, for while officiating at the Lord's Table, I saw what seemed to be a large black scorpion come crawling round the plated chalice. (A little Carib girl having recently died in convulsions three hours after being stung by one of these, I kept my eye on it with some anxiety.) It proved, however, to be no scorpion, but a very ugly nondescript beetle—an unclean-looking insect, with beak and antennæ of enormous length compared with the body. I was waiting for the opportunity of a pause in the service to get rid of it quietly, when it suddenly mounted on to the edge of the cup. Before it could get inside, or I could interfere, a smart gust of wind carried it away and deposited it among some respectably dressed females.

The alligator whose adventure had delayed our morning service made its appearance again just before evening prayers. A boy came running to say that it was lying at the water-side. The terrible embrace of the snake seemed to have squeezed out what little sense the creature might have had, for it made no effort to escape.

After it had been shot through the head and neck, and hauled up on the bank, we thoroughly examined it, opening and shutting its mouth to see the mechanism of the jaws, and the *pad*, which, attached to the lower jaw, between the jagged teeth, does

duty as a tongue, and is covered with a rough, grater-like substance, as is the palate above. It mattered not what any one did to the head or body, it made no sign, but when the root of the tail was only slightly touched with a stick, it lifted one of its hind legs to brush it away; on being touched there more heavily, it lifted both (one feebly, the foot having received a shot), and continued to do so as often as the experiment was tried. We expected then to see it rally and show fight,—but no; it seemed perfectly dead as regarded its fore-parts, and only sensitive behind.

The reptile was a female,[1] and had within an immense number of eggs, in different stages of

[1] Since the above was first written, I have had an opportunity of seeing the tenacity with which the female alligator clings to her offspring. A black man, digging a grave in my parish churchyard, was attacked by one and had to run. Returning with assistance he found the reptile close by on its nest, which was made of dry grass and herbage, shaped like a low cone, and was afterwards found to contain forty eggs; these eggs were about the size of those of a hen, white, and with rough shells. From them she would not be driven, but rushed savagely and recklessly on her assailants, and put them to flight. At last the nest was set on fire by blazing shavings tied to the end of a pole, and the mother then fled from the conflagration. While performing the burial service that evening, I saw the burnt nest and eggs, and, just as I was leaving the ground, a man went to pick one up; as he was doing so the mother, who was hiding near, again made her appearance, and with savage onslaught scattered the assembly.

During my experience I have known one woman drowned, another nearly scalped, a young girl seized and pulled into the water, but rescued, and several cases of wounds, two of which ended fatally, inflicted by this, the *smaller* kind of alligator.

development. Some poor half-starved Warau Indian boys begged for these, boiled them in a pot with a little salt, and had a glorious supper. They also begged for the tail and hind quarters, which they cut up and smoked for future use. The flesh was white, and looked delicate, but had a scent that was rather deterrent to weak stomachs. The next morning the poor boys, *having asked permission*, searched the canal for the rest of the body, which had been thrown into it; but the tide or the fishes had taken it away.

With a few remarks bearing on the above-mentioned incident, I will conclude.

It is very rarely indeed that a struggle between two such reptile antagonists is witnessed. Both species are common enough, but both wisely prefer prey that is more easily overpowered.

A large snake was said to have been killed in that neighbourhood in a state of torpidity, which, when cut open, was found to have an alligator inside. But that was more than thirty years before, and the existing generation had begun to doubt the fact.

An alligator, enveloped in the coils of a camùdi, had also long ago been seen going rapidly out to sea with the falling spring-tide in the wet season. The old negro who had seen them could now point triumphantly to the reptiles in the canal in proof of his assertion.—One felt curious to know how long that sea-going camùdi had clung to its victim when they were both buffeted by the salt waves; what the

sharks and sawfishes in the estuary thought of their unusual visitors; and also, what they did to them.

An old friend, whose bush experience has been greater than my own, and to whom I told the incident I had witnessed, observed that the alligator, being in the water, was more easily overpowered by the camùdi than if it had been on land.

"A creature that can lie flat and cling to the ground can baffle, as long as it does so, all efforts of the constrictor to cast a coil around it; and," added my friend, "it is the *first coil* which gives that kind of snake the advantage which is so fatal to their victims. Other snakes instinctively know this, and act accordingly. I once saw from this house a fight between a yellow-tail" (a small species of constrictor) "and a labária. A stroke with the labária's venomous fangs would have settled the contest, but the yellow-tail had come on it by surprise, caught it by the neck, and was holding it tightly down on the ground. So neither snake could use its head, but the yellow-tail made unceasing efforts to get its tail under the labária, so as to coil round and crush him by superior muscular power; the latter, however, lay quite flat, and, though well beaten by the tail of its foe, would not move. The yellow-tail, being unable to move its head without being bitten, could not manage to get a single coil around its weaker antagonist. I watched them for about twenty minutes, and then, seeing no change of tactics and no end to the contest, and having no more time to spare, shot them both."

I then mentioned the statement of a gentleman in Berbice, that, while sleeping on the river, a large camùdi had aroused him by its efforts to thrust him from the side of the boat, so that it might get a coil around and crush him. The man, aware of his danger, lay as close as he could to the boat's side, till the snake, finding no opening, left him.[1]

This statement had been disbelieved by some. My friend, however, expressed no incredulity. "That snake," said he, "would not have left the man if he could have cast a single coil around neck, body, or limbs. It is the *first coil* that does the mischief."

I have since thought on these last words, as affording no unapt illustration of the old serpent's dealing with ourselves. Perhaps some of my brethren in the ministry, and those who have the care of youth, may think the same. And if any young person, religiously brought up, but sorely tempted to indulge unlawful desires, which lead to ruin, should read them, and take additional warning, in the start of active life, to avoid that "*first coil*" which "*does the mischief*," they will not have been written in vain.

[1] Duff's "Notes on British Guiana."

# XI.

## ACAWOIO MIGRATIONS.

(1840–1866.)

Acawoio characteristics—Their trading journeys—The great imposture—Going to "see God"—Capui—Philip's undertaking—Tracts sent to those who could not read—Long journeys for instruction—Serṛawaik—Maiongkongs, Arecunas, etc.—Hostility of sorcerers and revival of blood-feud—Failure of cassava crop and its effect.

WE resume here the historical account of the progress of the Gospel amongst our aborigines.

In the course of these sketches we have chiefly noticed three races, the Arawâk, Warau, and Caribi. The two former dwell near the sea, the latter somewhat more inland.

Behind them, in the interior, are the scattered villages of those who call themselves the "Kapohnyámu,"[1] but are generally distinguished by the name of Acawoios. Their language differs entirely from the Arawâk and Waraŭ, but has considerable

[1] That is, "the people." Each of these races calls itself "the people" *par excellence.*

affinity to the Caribi, and also to the dialects spoken by their neighbours, the Arecunas, Macusis, and others. It is probable that those races, with what are now their various subdivisions, were, in remote ages, one strong nation; perhaps the same which carved the hieroglyphics on the "Timehri" (*marked*) rocks which are found here and there, from the coast of our colony to the Rio Negro.

But of the history of those inland tribes we know much less than of that of the Caribs and Arawâks. Their past generations have left no written records; unless the hieroglyphics just mentioned, and which none can now decipher, contain any. All the information we can glean is derived from their legendary lore, and their family traditions. The first is mythical; the latter only extend a few generations back, and speak chiefly of civil strife, and the separation into scattered clans thereby occasioned.[1]

Of the various inland tribes the Acawoios are, in point of energy and enterprise, the most important.

They are a thoughtful people, possessing much force of character, entering fully into whatever they undertake, and resolute both for good and evil.

They are possessed of strong domestic affections, are loving parents and dutiful children; treat their wives well, and are less addicted to polygamy than the other races around them. Added to these

[1] "Legends and Myths," Part iv.

good qualities is the virtue of hospitality, which is indeed strong in the whole Indian race, but particularly so with them.

On the other hand, they possess qualities of a very different nature. The darkest of these is their proneness to blood-revenge, and their secrecy and persistence in exacting it. The system of "Kanáima," as may be supposed, has for ages flourished (and may have taken its rise) among them.

It is to poison, administered by an old Acawoio sorcerer, that the death of Mr. Youd was attributed. That good missionary was the first who laboured for their conversion, but after his untimely end, with the exception of a few who had joined themselves to the congregation of the Rev. J. H. Bernau, at Bartica, the work among them seemed to have failed altogether.

My first introduction to these people was in 1841, by a party of twelve young Caribs, who, hearing me express a desire to visit them, voluntarily undertook to guide me to one of their settlements on the Isororo. So, as I gladly accepted their offer, my escort, having their front hair adorned with bright red annotto, on which was stuck some white down by way of feathers, set out with me for the nearest Acawoio place, named Konosā.

We were there received with every mark of hostility—not by the people, but by a number of fierce hunting-dogs, which ran down upon us in

full cry. Had their master also been hostile, and acquainted with English ballad lore, he might have addressed me in the words of the friar to Robin Hood—

> "Here is for every man a dog,
> And I myself for thee!"

for my Carib friends and his dogs were just equal in number.

The latter, however, were not inclined to a fair distribution of antagonists. The whole pack came straight at me. A man clothed from head to foot had never been seen there before; and consequently, in their doggish ideas, could have no business there. I was rescued by the Caribs, who used their paddles freely in clearing the way up to the settlement. There I was kindly received by the inhabitants, who gave a willing response when I explained the religious object of my visit.

Seeing the rest of the pack ranged on a long table, each tied to a bar of wood (the total number being six and twenty), I asked the meaning. The old man, who was master of the place, told me that the dogs were of a remarkably fine hunting breed, which he had purchased in a far-distant region, and was rearing and training for sale.

This was my first introduction to the Acawoios, and it showed me their commercial spirit. No other Indian race that I know of would fetch a superior breed of dogs from a distant land, and undertake the trouble and expense of rearing a large pack with a view to future gain.

The Acawoios, however, are accustomed to undertake long journeys for traffic and barter. In former days (and possibly even now, in some instances) their expeditions were *predatory* also. They would attack peaceful villages under cover of darkness, slay all who were able to offer resistance, enslave the defenceless, and carry off the spoil. Thus they became even more terrible to the peaceful tribes, because more subtle in their rapacity, than the formidable Caribs themselves.

But if they found people strong, well armed, and vigilant, they would feast and trade with them in the most friendly manner, exchanging beads, knives, etc., procured from us, for the valuable ourali[1] (or wourali) poison and blow-pipes; and barter these again for the productions of some more distant horde. For each district has something or other of better quality than is to be found elsewhere.

[1] The poison mentioned above has been used from time immemorial by the inland tribes in procuring game. Various plants are said to be used in its preparation; a species of bush-rope furnishing the deadly principle, which proves fatal to man or beast when it mixes with the blood.

Small arrows, or spikes, of about one foot in length, have their points envenomed with the ourali. The other end of the slender dart has a ball of fleecy cotton fixed on it, to fill the cavity of the blow-pipe through which it is discharged.

The blow-pipe, which may be called the Indian's fowling-piece, is about nine feet in length. It is made of a small reed or palm, which is hollowed, and lined with another smooth reed. With the tiny poisoned arrows blown through these tubes, the natives bring down the birds, monkeys, and other small creatures which they use for food.

The migratory movements of the Acawoios would, to a stranger, seem most capricious. But they are all conducted with profound forethought, and according to a regular system, the result of the experience of ages. There are certain friendly villages, where their roving traders are sure of getting cassava bread on their long journeys. Their expeditions extend into Brazil and Venezuela, and as they halt and sojourn in various places, sometimes occupy months, sometimes even years.

A people of quiet resolution, and of such enterprising habits, must necessarily possess much influence over other more stationary tribes. They are the great carriers of news; and rumours, whether true or false, circulate quickly by their means over a vast extent of country, and sometimes cause migrations on a considerable scale.

I have in my time known two of those extensive movements: the first, caused by an imposture, leading the Indian population to a remote district in the interior; the second, long years after, bringing the people of the interior towards our missions near the coast.

We will now describe the first of these.

It was in the days when Joseph Smith, in the United States, was giving the finishing touch to his Mormon imposture, and setting up his temple at Nauvoo. His fame had reached our colony. Probably in emulation of his daring example, another, also named Smith, conceived the idea of

establishing a spiritual dominion over the simple Indians of the interior, with whose language he was acquainted, being the son, it was said, of a settler on the upper Demerara.

His first attempt was high up the Essequibo. There, having secretly buried a quantity of beads, and other articles, near an Indian place, he went and stayed with the people; and after a while told them that he had a divine revelation of a secret treasure—which, of course, he found, and distributed amongst them. This succeeded for a time; he was treated by the people with much respect, and lived at free quarters. But after a while they *wanted more*, and finding that his inspiration did not return, they put him into a little canoe, and dismissed him. He got down to our mission at Bartica, where Mr. Bernau gave him the relief he needed, and the reproof which he deserved, but would not profit by.

His next attempt was on a much greater scale, and in a district which no white man had ever visited, north of Mount Roraima. The Acawoios there became his dupes, and his chief agents. Availing himself of their perfect knowledge of the country and of the other tribes, he, as a Divine Person, sent forth his invitations and commands to the native Indians of every race, bidding them to come to that spot, where they should "*see God*, be freed from all the calamities of life, and possess lands of such boundless fertility, that a large crop of cassava would grow from a single stick!"

I have elsewhere[1] more fully related the progress of that imposture, and will only briefly mention here that for more than a year it was perfectly successful. The Indians near the coast bought guns and ammunition, according to the instructions given them, and numbers from every district, far and near, went off to that land of boundless fertility —to possess those matchless cassava fields, and to "see God."

The Acawoios, who dwelt near the head of the Pomeroon, led by "Capui" (*i.e.* the moon) chief of their countrymen on the Barahma, undertook that long and toilsome journey. Their example infected the Caribs who dwelt nearer to our mission, and they also went.

I was just recovering from a severe illness, but mustered strength sufficient for a voyage to the Carib district, hoping to stop them. The upper course of the river we found blocked by two immense mora trees, which had been cut from the tall forest on each bank, so as to fall across and interlace their upper branches in mid-stream. This had been done by the deluded men, to enable their wives and families to cross more readily, as on a rustic bridge.

Often in after years have I thought on their abandoned villages and the deserted river; and recalled the day when we gazed sadly on that rude bridge, over which those poor people had scrambled

[1] "Indian Tribes of Guiana," p. 257.

a few days before; all, down to the age of infancy, believing that they had received a divine command to go and "see God."

A time was indeed coming, which we could not then foresee—because it was still distant and gave no sign of its approach—a time when the stream of migration of the Acawoios would be turned even more strongly towards the Christian missions from which at that time they were fleeing.

When the deluded people arrived at the river Cako, where the head-quarters of the impostor were, they were received by those who had preceded them with mirth and jollity, drinking and dancing. From a small secret chamber at night[1] the mysterious one uttered promises to the obedient and faithful, with terrible denunciations of all who should disobey his commands.

The success was so great, however, that the imposture collapsed under it. The arrivals became too numerous. Cassava failed—all the game around had been slain—and neither the psuedo-Christ nor his chosen adherents were able to feed the multitude. So the camp broke up, and the deluded people, seeking food as they went through forest and savannah, regained at last their abandoned homes and grass-grown fields—to suffer hunger there.

These events happened in 1845. They broke up the great gathering of the Acawoios and their

[1] S. Matt. xxiv. 26.

cognate tribes, and discredited the impostor, who absconded soon after.[1] But ere he went, to save appearances, he gave Capui a commission written in hieroglyphic characters, with a leaden seal attached, empowering that chief to collect all who had not obeyed the first summons, and bring them by a certain date. This document Capui at first regarded with great awe and respect; but the sufferings and privations of the long homeward journey opened his eyes at last, and in bitter disgust he threw it away in the forest.

This delusion was followed by a period of great distress and disturbance. For the poor dupes of the imposture, relying on a promise of miraculous support, had neglected to plant their fields, and many of them were led by hunger to commit depredations on those of other tribes. This led to bloodshed and feuds, in which the Kanáima system had full scope. At this period a body of Acawoios made their attack on the Pomeroon Mission, as I have related in a previous sketch.[2]

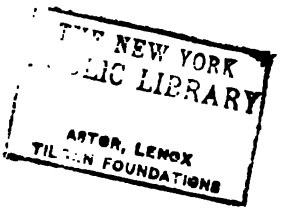
After this the whole tribe held completely aloof from us until the year 1853.

In that year the family of Capui, who had died in the interval, came to offer themselves to us as catechumens, led by his brother. They asked to be allowed to live with the Arawâks and Caribs on the mission hill. I gave them a site near the

[1] The impostor lived a number of years after this event on the upper Essequibo, and died there.

[2] Cornelius the Arawâk.

POMEROON MISSION IN 1853.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immense ceiba (or silk cotton) tree which grows there, though the other tribes were most unwilling to have them as neighbours, regarding them with dread.

The event justified the permission given. I never had met people of any colour or race so attentive to religious duties. They then knew no English, and none of us could speak Acawoio. But one of them could speak Arawâk, and interpret to his countrymen the religious truths which Cornelius gladly imparted to him.

Capui had left one son, who was baptized by the name of Philip, and taught with the other children at our school. When they had been with us nearly ten years, Philip conceived the idea of teaching his countrymen in their own tongue by means of cards and tracts, such as the S.P.C.K., at my request, had some time before printed for the three other races then at our missions.

So, without saying a word to me of his purpose, he went and lived with the Caribs for some months, until he had thoroughly mastered the Apostles' Creed and Lord's Prayer in their tongue; by this means ensuring correctness. Then he came and offered to help me do the same in Acawoio. For this purpose he often came and stayed with me for weeks together at my parsonage on the coast, improving himself in English, and teaching me his own tongue. And this process went on for several years.

Philip meant to benefit eventually not his

own family alone, but also his widely scattered nation.

And such was the result. For a demonstration in 1863, apparently hostile to the Acawoios at our mission, terminated in the renewal of intercourse between them and their heathen countrymen, which had been broken off entirely by their coming to us. The wilder clans were invited to join us. Copies of our completed translations, on thick cards, and with illustrated margins,[1] were sent to them; and these simple means aroused them from the apathetic state into which, after the collapse of the imposture eighteen years before, they had fallen.

The wild hordes, to whom we sent these little tracts, could not, of course, read a single word, for their language, like those of the other tribes, had not previously been reduced to writing. But the marginal illustrations had a great effect, especially that of the Crucifixion. So, to inquire and learn their meaning, and the words attached to them, those Acawoios began to come in parties of from thirty to seventy souls, and were followed by people of other and more distant tribes.

From the romantic valleys of the Masaruni, they came to the Cuyuni; crossed it, and then came over the Imataca hills to the head waters of the Waiini. There they cut down huge "mariwaiyani" (or purple-heart) trees; and, converting their bark

[1] To them were soon added the explanatory catechisms, and that on the Holy Scriptures, uniform with those in the other three tongues. Genesis and St. Matthew, etc., were added in after years.

into "wood-skin" canoes, came, with their families, down the Waiini, and through the network of swamps and streams to our missions.

Ere leaving their distant settlements, their women had provided as much cassava bread as they could carry. Each party would then march for three days, and halt for two, during which the men would hunt and smoke their game.

On reaching our stations they were, of course, dependent for food on those who had become Christians and settled there. These latter supplied their successive companies with even more than their national hospitality, literally *sharing their all* with them.

Many of the strangers settled permanently with us. Others, after receiving instruction for a few months, returned to their own places, and after a time came back, bringing others with them. Amongst those thus brought, was Serrawaik, the chief of the Cuyuni, whose long white beard (a very rare thing in an Indian) showed his great age.

Though feeble from length of years, this old man made four journeys in two years, staying each time some weeks with us to receive instruction. On his fourth visit I baptized him and his aged wife, finding them well prepared, and seeing his anxiety. "I am getting more feeble daily," said he, "and may not live to come again to you."

Once more, however, he was able to return, to witness the baptism of his son. A day or two after that event, he fainted in the chapel during

morning prayers, and was carried by his people to his hammock, which he only quitted to be taken to his own place on the Cuyuni, where he died soon after.

His death was a loss to the infant Church among his people, though to himself, as we trust, it was gain. Called at the eleventh hour, he had done what he could.

The Acawoios, after the old chief's death, still continued to come from that great valley (through which the Cuyuni finds its way over many falls and rapids to the Essequibo), and ere long they brought with them strangers from some distant parts. Amongst these were three families of Maiongkongs, whose country is near the head of the Orinoco. They were very good and intelligent people, and their wives (one especially) had the look and bearing of gentlewomen. They at once settled near Waramuri, and worshipped there.

In the year 1865 we were surprised (and our timid Waraus alarmed) by the arrival of about seventy Arecunas, from the highest, wildest, and most interesting region of Guiana, the vicinity of Mount Roraima.

Some of the people we already had were sufficiently wild in their appearance, but these Arecunas were wilder still. The men were tall, and well limbed. They seemed at first to have large bushy whiskers, but when you got a nearer view, those facial ornaments proved to be only bunches of black feathers, attached to reeds fixed in the lobes

of their ears. In the dividing cartilage of the nostrils they had also the reedy ornament usually worn by the Acawoios.

The men of this race wore little clothing, certainly, but their women had less. Females of mature age had only small aprons of beads. Yet they were modest, and perfectly unconscious of any offence or impropriety.

Being tattooed round the mouth, they seemed to have lips of enormous size. And in addition to this artificial beauty, many of those poor females had lines in imitation of moustachios, commencing on the upper lip, and going in flowing curves over the cheeks, and towards the ears.

Several of these Arecunas stayed with us permanently, clothing themselves after a time like the Christian Indians around them. Their indelibly tattooed faces were soon noted as regularly appearing at Divine service, and (when they had become Church members) at Holy Communion. And pleasant, though comical enough, was the smile of greeting ever given by those apparently big-mouthed women to the bishop or missionary on their visits there.

Besides the various races which then flocked to those mission stations, a few Macusis also came. Our teachers were astonished, and often said, "We did not fetch these people" (which was perfectly true); "God has brought them here." The only human means used were the translations of the Creed, etc., into *Acawoio*, which had aroused that

singular people, who had stirred up the others; their tongue being the *lingua-franca* of those distant wilds—the key, in fact, to the interior.

To those who knew the dark antecedents of that nation, and the power of their superstitions, it was touching to witness, during those years, their anxious *groping*, as it were, after God, their long journeys to and fro, first to "see Him," and afterwards to hear the words of Christ concerning the Father in heaven.

The clan of Capui, with whom this movement had originated, received their countrymen with joy, as has been said. But their satisfaction had a terrible drawback, which soon after appeared.

There was a blood-feud, which had begun in the days of their fathers, but had then been lying dormant for many years. The heathen sorcerers, indignant at the efforts our people had made to draw their countrymen to the knowledge of Christ, revived this feud. The consequence was that, along with the numerous and sincere inquirers, came others, whose object was to destroy our converts, and especially Philip, whose father had been particularly obnoxious to them, and whose zeal was well known.[1]

[1] Various attempts were made to destroy Philip by poison or Kanáima. From an attack of the latter kind he escaped by striking down the would-be murderer with the stock of his gun, after an unsuccessful attempt to escape from him by flight. He left the man for dead. This incident, and the death by lingering sickness of many of his friends, attributed to slow poison, affected the mind

Our people were in danger, but not fully aware of it: and still the influx of their countrymen went on.

It was not checked until the year 1866. In that year heavy and incessant rains destroyed the cassava, the root of which, made into bread, is the Indian's staff of life. The crop was a total failure, and our people could not then feed the wild strangers, being in want themselves.

That want of food turned the stream of Acawoio migration. They could not come to us as before.

But circumstances had arisen which saved them the long journey from the Cuyuni river across the Imataca hills, and the voyage down the Waiini. Provision was being made for their spiritual wants nearer to their native homes. On the Essequibo, and on the Demerara, missions were being established for their benefit.

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and conduct of Philip for a time, and probably shortened his days. But these incidents happened some years later than the time mentioned above, when his vigour and usefulness were undiminished.

## XII.

## AMONG THE WOOD-SKINS.

(1866–1880.)

Missions founded by Mr. Farrar—Kyk-over-al—How to make and navigate a wood-skin—Voyages above the Demerara falls—Results—Wood-skin accident—The diver and his drunken companion—Muritáro—New mission—Its primitive buildings, and the work there.

A FEW miles to the westward of the noble Essequibo, its largest tributaries, the Masaruni and Cuyuni, unite their waters. On the left bank of the fine stream thus formed, and not far from the spot where it enters the Essequibo, the Government of the colony has established its penal settlement. At the time we are speaking of, the Rev. T. Farrar was the chaplain there. During his leisure hours he strove to do what he could for the Indians near him; and by his energy in a few years three mission stations were established.

The chief of these was named St. Edward's. As the Acawoio tongue is very polysyllabic, he gratified their taste by calling the hitherto unnamed spot where the chapel stands "Mesopotamia." (It is the

point between the Masaruni and the Cuyuni). The Indians who assembled there, being stimulated to exert themselves, willingly contributed hard wood for the frame of the building, and additional wood for sale to meet the expense of its erection.

When I saw it—in 1871, and again in 1874—it was a very neat and picturesque building, erected on a low rocky hill, and thronged with worshippers, chiefly Acawoios. Their catechist, who was making good progress in their language, was a man of pure African descent, named McCloggin.

The second station formed by Mr. Farrar, in his indefatigable endeavours to benefit the red men, was lower down the Essequibo, and called Macedonia. The third, higher up, he named Thessalonica.

The Rev. W. H. Campbell, who succeeded him, was assiduous in keeping up the work his predecessor had begun.

Nearly opposite the chapel of St. Edward, a small rocky island rises abruptly from the river, on which the Dutch in the seventeenth century built a strong fort. They called it "Kyk-over-al," from its commanding the Masaruni, Cuyuni, and the large stream formed by their united waters. It was their defence against invasion by the Spaniards (who sometimes came from the distant Orinoco down the Cuyuni in flotillas of canoes), and also against hostile tribes of aboriginal Indians.

On visiting that island, now covered with trees, we saw the remains of the fort—a ruined archway of Dutch bricks, surmounted by a mouldering stone,

on which the arms of Holland had once been carved.

It is remarkable, that when the Dutch first landed there, they found on that island the remains of a former fort, with the rudely carved arms of Portugal, showing that enterprising colonists of the latter nation—countrymen of De Gama and Cabral—had been before them; but that, notwithstanding the strength of their position, they had failed to make a permanent settlement there. The native tribes, with the then formidable Caribs at their head, seem to have been too strong for them, and to have baffled there, as elsewhere, the first attempts of the white man to settle in Guiana.

The Hollanders, when they came, speedily entered into an alliance with the Arawâks; and, thus supported, held their ground.

The Dutch fort was dismantled when no longer needed. Its cannon have long since disappeared, and its masonry—even if spared by the Vandalism of settlers—will soon have perished under the growth, unceasing and destructive, of its superincumbent vegetation.

The strife of races which once raged there, and led to its erection, has long since passed away. Of this we could have had no stronger evidence than was presented by those hundreds of red-skins, who, not far from its crumbling walls, were being gathered into Christ's fold by a white missionary, and receiving instruction from the black teacher he had placed amongst them.

While this good work was going on in connection with the Essequibo, similar attempts were being made on the Demerara. Many of the Acawoios and others, who, on account of the want of food, could no longer visit the stations on the Pomeroon and Moruca, gladly availed themselves of these new stations. Some came by water down the rivers mentioned above, to the missions founded by Mr. Farrar; while those who went to the Demerara had first to cross the Essequibo, and then proceed overland by paths well known to their countrymen. They were sure of a hospitable reception from the Demerara Acawoios, whose wood-skins were lent them to travel up or down that river.

"Wood-skins" are merely pieces of bark, used by the Indians who live high up the rivers, where the streams are narrow and smooth.

They are made by felling a large tree (the "purple-heart" is the most suitable), and stripping off the tough and thick bark in one large piece. This is forced open; sticks are placed across it; and the process of widening goes on until it be nearly flat, the edges only being allowed their natural curl upwards.

It remains to give a spring to the extremities. Two or three feet from either end a slit is cut from the edge inward on both sides, and a block placed under both bow and stern; if, indeed, they can be called so when both are alike. The two ends being thus slightly raised while the bark is moist,

the whole is left to dry, after which it will keep the shape thus given to it. It remains to lace up the slits, or "ears," as the Indians call them, and your wood-skin is ready for use.

These craft cannot keep afloat where there is much swell, or short curling waves. Being heavier than water, they go down at once, if any part be submerged.

If you stand at the water-side of an Indian settlement, and observe those frail barks, you will see that, when afloat, some of them look more like boards that have been warped by the sun, than boats. They are so flat and low that you would expect to see one go down as soon as a man stepped upon it.

But if you wait, you will perhaps see a man approaching, with his wife and one or two children, the family cooking utensils, cassava and other provisions, a dog and a parrot, paddles, bow and arrows, and perhaps a gun. All these are soon on board. The wood-skin thus laden is carefully pushed off. They pause for a few seconds to trim it fairly, and then, with moderate speed, it goes steadily on its way, only keeping at the side of the stream to avoid the swell. It is the width and flatness of these craft which make them so steady; and low as they are they can carry considerable weight.

Wood-skins are much used by the Indians who dwell near the picturesque cataract, which, from its being the largest on the Demerara, has been called by the settlers on that river the "Great Falls."

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SALUTING KANAIMAPO.

A path leading upwards over the rocks on its eastern side is used for the conveyance of those craft, which are either dragged carefully up or down it, or else carried over on the heads and shoulders of their crews.

When, in 1867, it was thought expedient to enlarge our field of missionary enterprise by an expedition to the Acawoios who dwell near the head of the Demerara, we found ourselves obliged to embark in a wood-skin on the upper river; for the boats which had brought us to the foot of the cataract were, of course, too heavy to be dragged up that steep and rocky path.

Our party consisted of ten—the bishop, the Rev. F. Wyatt (now Archdeacon of Demerara), myself, Mr. G. Couchman, an intelligent settler, Philip, my Acawoio interpreter, and five paddlers of the same race. The Indians all squatted on the bottom of the wood-skin, while we sat on our baggage, and in this way we voyaged on.

We all had to sit very still, and preserve our equilibrium, as any accidental or careless swerve would have made one side of our wood-skin dip, and sent us all under, so ticklish is that kind of navigation. Our crew considered it quite a feat when the bishop, rising to his full height, saluted their chief, Kanáimapo; who, with many of his people in festive costume, came to the high bank of the river to gaze at us.

Low, flat, and dangerous as our wood-skin seemed, its sides being only three or four inches above the

surface of the water, it was a royal barge compared with the tiny specimens which passed us. At a little distance we, being so low ourselves, could see only the slight swell of water at their bows. On them were seated Indians, grotesquely painted, and got up to represent monkeys and other animals. They were going home from a grand fancy dress ball and paiwári-drinking; for there had been high carnival for two or three days at the place where we had met the chief.

We went, on that occasion, as far as Indians could be found on that river,[1] spent in teaching them five days (nights also in Philip's case, for they gave him no rest), and the result of the visit was to bring them down below the falls by hundreds. Mr. Couchman, who had been our pilot, then became their teacher. He instructed two young Acawoios, Taio and Jimbo, in the catechisms I had given him, and they taught the multitude of their countrymen. In that way they were being prepared for admission into the Church of Christ.

Seventeen months after that visit, the chapel at Malali rapids (about fifty miles below those falls) presented a spectacle which recalled the early days of the Christian Church.

The bishop, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Butt

[1] The Indians told us that the head of the Demerara is hidden in a dreary region of swamps and pools, which they themselves avoid, because of the water-boas which infest them. Those reptiles, being of enormous size and boldness, are permitted to reign there unmolested.

(who had built that chapel when stationed there some years before), found nearly the whole of the Demerara Acawoios there assembled. The sandy margin of the river was lined with wood-skins of all sizes, and the people who had come in them were anxiously desiring to be baptized.

After examination, three hundred and eighty-six of various ages were admitted by that Holy Sacrament into the Church of Christ. The administration took up two entire days. I was not present, but those who were have since told me of the striking spectacle then presented—the throng of Indians, and the earnestness visible in their countenances as they knelt at the font, while the chapel floor streamed with the water which had flowed over them.

There was at the time no missionary appointed for the Demerara, but parochial clergymen periodically made voyages up that river, and did what they could, under the bishop's guidance, to carry on the work.

In the course of 1869, Archdeacon Jones, who in previous years had often undertaken that duty, was commissioned to plant a mission at the foot of the falls, and I accompanied him.

We found there a large piece of land, which the Acawoios had already cleared as a site for the station. It was a pretty place, and seemed healthy; though from some former calamity it had been named "Eynéh-éhutáh," the *den of pain or misery* (since abbreviated into Eneyuda). They had also

erected a large shed to serve as a chapel, and gladly welcomed the catechist we placed amongst them.

When we visited the cataract we found the river so low, from long-continued drought, that we were able, by careful stepping, to reach and climb a huge boulder on the brink of the abyss. From that slippery standpoint we could see the torrent dashing madly down a slope of about four hundred feet through the beautiful tree-covered islets, until it reached the basin where we had left our boat, which was just visible through the summits of the tall trees below.

Turning, we beheld a sight less grand to the outward senses, yet to the Christian missionary still more pleasing. For a great number of Indians had just come down the river with their families, to attend Divine service and instruction next day.

They had landed on the rocks in the shady recess behind us, where they formed picturesque groups, the light copper tint of their skins being well set off by the shady foliage around and above them. They were waiting to speak to us a few words of kindly greeting ere carrying their wood-skins below the fall.

Their presence was another proof of the success with which Almighty God had blessed the effort made to carry the banner of the Cross above that rocky barrier.

Four years after, the bishop again took me with him to the stations on the Demerara. We had

then an opportunity of seeing for ourselves what ticklish craft wood-skins are, and the danger which attends their navigation.

In the dusk of the evening our rowers paused, for there were cries of distress ahead of us.

It was impossible to distinguish objects in the rapidly increasing gloom, but we could see that the faint gleam of the western sky was broken in its reflection on the water, showing that some huge creature was swimming there. We soon after stopped near a white object close to the bank, which proved to be an exhausted man.

He had been conveying to his settlement a quantity of newly purchased goods, when the inebriety of a mulatto companion had caused his wood-skin to dip, and it immediately went down. He had been swimming about to recover such of his goods as would float, and diving to fish up the rest. We could not but admire his energy, when we saw a large canister which he had managed to drag up the bank. But he had lost a good deal, and his sunken wood-skin he could not find.

We took him into our boat, and then proceeded to rescue his companion.

That worthy, too drunk to realize his danger, was whooping and singing with great glee under the bank some distance further on. Close by him was an Acawoio boy, in a very small wood-skin, who had been sent from a neighbouring settlement where the cries had been heard. The drunken man was making dashes through the water to seize the

little craft, but the boy had no mind to have that also sunk, and it was amusing to see the skill and care with which, while keeping near the man, he avoided each onslaught, backing and turning most cleverly, while the other ducked and floundered about, always, however, floating like a cork back to the river's bank, where he whooped and sung as before.

This absurd performance was abruptly terminated by our crew, four lusty negroes, who laid hold of the poor sot; and although he protested his perfect sobriety, and that he was rather a model of temperance than otherwise, lugged him into the boat with small ceremony, and no regard whatever to his bodily feelings. They there threatened him with unheard-of legal penalties, for delaying them (not to mention the bishop) by being drunk and incapable on the river.

We left the two men at the settlement, which was fortunately so near; and were glad to hear on our return voyage that the poor diver, having resumed his task next day, had recovered such of his goods as had not been spoiled by the water, and also fished up his wood-skin. Settlers, white and coloured, as well as the Indians, are so much in the river that they become nearly amphibious; and, indeed, they who travel in wood-skins need to be so.

The river had, by the time I am now speaking of, the services of an itinerant missionary clergyman, the Rev. C. Dance, whom we met at the

Eneyuda station, and he came down the river with us.

I was much surprised and gratified to find, about half-way down, a new mission, named Muritáro. It seemed to have sprung up spontaneously, since I was last there, under a young man of German extraction, named Lobertz. To him a number of Indians, from the wild and remote regions west of the Essequibo, had attached themselves. He was teaching them by means of our Acawoio books, though in a class of a hundred and fifty, which I catechized, there were but thirty pure Acawoios. The others belonged to the Paramuna branch of that race, who speak that tongue with little difference, and to the Arecuna and Macusi nations, whose dialects vary considerably. Yet they all understood the questions, and answered them correctly.

It was most gratifying to see them all thus engaged together, and to witness the suppression, through the Gospel, of national animosities. For only nine years before the Arecunas and Macusis had been at open war. Now all was peace. The latter tribe seemed to be coming over in increasing numbers. And the wild-looking Indian, who steered the boat of the worthy itinerant missionary on the Demerara, was an Arecuna from the very heart of our western highlands—the foot of Roraima.

Two things deeply moved us at Muritáro—the earnestness displayed by those wild-looking people, and the manifest and extreme *poverty* of the infant

mission. The chapel was of thatch; yet, poor as it was, it looked like a place of worship; its apsidal chancel, with its fittings, being all in good taste.

The teacher's house was of a very humble character. The Indians, however, had just built him another, which he had not yet occupied, but gave for our accommodation. The roof of this was of thatch, but the sides were of slabs of bark, newly stripped from the trees. So was the floor, where the slabs were rather wave-like and uneven to walk upon.

There were no windows as yet to our sleeping apartment; but two openings had been left for entrance, which could be closed, if we chose, by flexible doors, made also of bark slabs, laced or tied together.

The scent of the fresh bark was strong, and kept us awake for some time. While we were thus resting in our hammocks, after a heavy day's work and voyage, enjoying the beauty of a calm tropical night—with the full moon shedding its glorious light over cottages, cultivation, banana and palm trees, and showing also the dense forest beyond—the solemn stillness was sweetly broken by the voice of one of the Indian girls taught at the mission. She was singing the well-known hymn—

> "Jerusalem the golden,
> With milk and honey blest."

We had often heard Acawoios singing our English hymns by moonlight at the older missions, and keeping it up till a late hour; but never had we

been so impressed by it, as when, at the poor station of Muritáro, we heard that sweet and solitary voice, sounding in the stillness of night as if it came from the other world. It harmonized so well with the calm and peaceful beauty of the scene, and seemed also to show the influence which had brought together the wild people there reposing around us.

For they, nearly all strangers, and some of antagonistic races, had come from distant regions—of savannah, wilderness, and mountain—to hear of and enter the kingdom, whose peaceful blessings are figuratively represented by the milk and honey of the promised land; as its final glory is by the golden city, shining in the light of God and of the Lamb.

NOTE.—There are, lower down the river, other stations of an earlier date, founded and served by the Demerara clergy. But they are chiefly attended by the coloured settlers and by the Arawâks, who generally travel in more substantial craft than the "wood-skins" used nearer the heads of rivers.

## XIII.

# THE WESTERN WILDS OF GUIANA.

The great water-shed of Roraima—Its inaccessible mural precipice—Curiosities on the Essequibo—The Kaieteur fall—Missionary work on the Potaro—Review of the rise and spread of Christianity among the Acawoios—The tribes and regions beyond.

HERE is, on the western border of our colony, a remarkable group of mountains, from which streams flow in every direction. Some of these waters join the northern rivers of Brazil, which are tributary to the mighty Amazon; others go towards the Orinoco; while others, as the Masaruni, find their way to our largest river, the Essequibo.

He who would penetrate to that great water-shed by the valley of the Masaruni, must pass through scenery of the most wild and romantic character.

The upper course of that river is so circuitous, and impeded by cataracts of such a formidable nature, that the Indian travellers generally quit it when half-way up, and strike overland. This latter track also is full of peril. There are precipices where you have to hold on by bush-ropes, climb by a rude ladder, or place your feet on the interlacing roots of trees and shrubs which grow there.

Mr. Appun, a naturalist, who went that way some years ago, described the track as "crossing wild ravines on half-rotten trunks, to pass along which requires the nerve and skill of rope-dancers." In his last day's journey, which was the worst, he and his Indians climbed the face of a rocky acclivity for three hours, when, surmounting the forest, they enjoyed a glorious prospect of Roraima, the grand sandstone ridge rising above all. Its mural precipice, stretching for miles, is of enormous perpendicular height, and no way of reaching its summit has as yet been found.

As the party came in sight, the dark veil of clouds, which usually covers it, lifted up; and four distinct cataracts were seen plunging from summit to base.

Sir R. Schomburgk, who, in 1838, gave the first authentic account of this remarkable range, approached it by a more circuitous and easy route, from the opposite, or south-west quarter. After waiting for eight days at an Arecuna village for

the mountain to show itself, he counted fifteen falls in one view after a thunderstorm. And Mr. Brown, the geologist and explorer, saw, in October, 1872, from the mouth of a cave thirty miles distant, what he took to be a great fall on the northern side, looking "like a white thread against the dark blue side of the mountain." An old Arecuna told him that it *was* a fall, "very wide as well as very high, and one of the sources of the Caroni."

It seems that that immense mass of sandstone, covered with primeval forest, precipitous on every side, and stretching for miles like an immense wall, attracts to itself and condenses no small portion of the vapours with which the humid climate of Guiana is charged. Hence the torrents, which, in various places and at irregular intervals, dash from its table-like summit.

Very few white men have seen that remarkable mountain, and no missionary that I know of has hitherto penetrated so far. Yet the people who dwell near it have, from time to time, visited us for Christian instruction, as the course of these sketches has shown.

Roraima is in some respects the most extraordinary natural object in Guiana, certainly the most stupendous. But there are others of almost equal interest; as the traveller may find, who, instead of mounting the Masaruni, seeks enjoyment on the broad and beautiful waters, and amidst the lovely scenery, of the island-studded Essequibo.

Ascending that river, and passing some respect-

able rapids in various places, you can, if you please, proceed up to Waraputa, and, in addition to its rapids, see there the ancient "Timehri," or carvings on the rocks, and the site of the last station which the good missionary Youd attempted to found, after he had been driven from Pirara.

You can pass on to the extraordinary pile of granite rocks, four in number, rising to a height of a hundred and sixty feet; the second resting on the lower one by three supporting points, and the two uppermost resembling a water-jar and its cover, whence its names, in the Arawâk and Caribi tongues, "Comūti" or "Taquiári."

Or, if you are sure that your commissariat (and boots) will hold out, instead of going so far up the Essequibo, you can turn aside into the Potaro, toward the rugged western region. There, after passing minor falls and rapids, you will find one of the most remarkable cataracts in the world, called, from its quaint Indian legend, "Koe-tu' euk," *old man's* fall. This name, from a mispronunciation, has been written "Kaieteur."

That noble fall is at no great distance, as the bird flies, from the site of the abandoned mission at Waraputa. Yet so far are the Indians from realizing our appreciation of what is grand and beautiful in nature, that none had given to missionary or settler any account of its magnificence. To them it was simply an evil—a fatal obstruction to their continuous navigation of the Potaro, and nothing more.

It was not until April, 1871, that Mr. Brown, returning in that direction from a geological survey of the adjacent region, came, to his surprise, upon it, and brought the news to Georgetown, that on this hitherto unnoticed river there existed a cataract 369 feet in width, the upper portion of which descends in one fall to a depth of 741 feet, and then rushes down in a succession of smaller cataracts, which make the entire depth 822 feet.

Others, who were able to undertake the expedition, and to accomplish the rugged climbing in the last stage, which, in the absence of a suitable path, can only be performed by robust men, have since visited the Kaieteur.

They who have done so—stood above the cataract—and bathed in the basin below it, speak with enthusiasm of the magnificent scenery around; of the beauty of the falling river, with its varying tints of brown and orange; of the ever-changing veil of waving, eddying mist, arising from the abyss; and of the lovely rainbow which clothes the whole.

They have also noticed with surprise the immense flights of birds, issuing from their breeding-places in the great cavern, which the undermining action of the waters has hollowed behind the fall.

The inhabitants of the Potaro, and of its tributary the Curiebrong, are chiefly of the Acawoio race; the Paramûna (or Patamūna) branch of that tribe being the most numerous.

Those rivers themselves, though marked on our

maps, had been unexplored previously to Mr. Brown's visit and discovery of the great fall. Some of their inhabitants had from time to time travelled to our mission stations, but no missionary had as yet visited them in their secluded homes.

They had, however, received instruction from their countrymen (for, armed with his little books, every travelling Acawoio who could read had become a missionary teacher), and had made such progress, that the Rev. C. Dance, who, accompanied by Mr. Couchman, visited them in 1876, found them sufficiently advanced for admission into the Christian Church, and baptized some hundreds.

In the interesting report of his voyage, which he afterwards published, he mentions their habit of family prayer; a common practice with those who attended our established missions, but which one would scarcely have expected to find in a region so desolate as regarded the means of grace.[1]

The visit of Mr. Dance gave a great impetus to the work thus begun, though the want of funds prevented at that time the establishment of the mission he recommended to be placed among them at the mouth of the Curiebrong.

But those Indians, with the quiet resolution of

[1] While offering their devotions, which we have often heard in the evening, and again at the first dawn of day, these families *recline in their hammocks*. This, however, is not from indolence or lack of reverence, but because they thereby avoid the noxious creatures which might molest or disturb them while kneeling on their earthen floors.

their nation, persevered in their efforts to become a Christian people.

For several years they came over to Mr. Lobertz, at Muritáro on the Demerara, to receive instruction from him; but at last they made application that he might be sent over to the Potaro, and located amongst them.

Having received permission, he went with them, and after sixteen days' voyaging arrived at Shenanbauwie, a village about two days above the Kaieteur. In a few days after his arrival, about eight hundred persons of the neighbouring clans had assembled there. The work assuming such dimensions, he sent to the bishop to ask that a clergymen might be sent there; and the Rev. W. E. Pierce, who had been lately appointed to the charge of the Essequibo Missions, went from Bartica, our oldest station, to this, the newest in the mission field.

After surmounting the difficult falls and rapids which impede the lower Potaro, he met the Indians, who had come down to help him at the great cataract, with such small craft as they had at their disposal.

By lashing two small and narrow canoes abreast with stout poles at stem and stern, Mr. Pierce managed to get a steady conveyance; and on the following day reached the place. There the willing poople had already erected a chapel-school (ninety feet by forty-five), with a thatched roof, and floor of bark raised five feet above the ground.

As he approached that building he heard "a buzzing sound, as of innumerable bees." This, as he soon found, arose from "hundreds of men, women, and children, teaching and learning in their own tongue, and with the low voice common to Indians, the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, Ten Commandments, and even the Biblical Catechism" used at the older stations. There were never less than four hundred Indians present, and once nine hundred and sixty-seven were counted there.

Seldom has any portion of the Church's great mission field seemed more ripe unto the harvest than that land which had so suddenly, and as it were spontaneously, stretched forth her hands unto God.[1]

It may be interesting to pause here, and look back upon our experience of Christian progress amongst the Acawoios. There were—

First, the early labours of Mr. Youd, which, after occasioning his own death, seemed to have failed altogether (1837–9).

Then came their earnest desire to "find God," excited in their minds by a gross imposture (1845).

Then the unexpected coming over to us of one

[1] From the report of Mr. Pierce to the Bishop of Guiana (published by the S.P.G. in "Mission Field," January, 1881), it appears that at that station were baptized, after examination, 1084 Patamunas, 213 Macusis, 62 Arecunas, 2 Acawoios (proper), and 37 Wapisianas. But the difficulty of access induced Mr. Pierce to advise the removal of the station *below* the Kaieteur and lesser cataracts, to the point selected by Mr. Dance, the junction of the Potaro with the Curiebrong.

of their clans (1853), and their (equally unexpected) zeal in the conversion of their brethren.

Then the great migration (1863–66) from the distant wilds of the interior to the missions on the Pomeroon and Moruca, and afterwards to those founded by Mr. Farrar on the Essequibo.

Then the various stages of the work on the Demerara, and its results, as seen conspicuously on the Potaro.

With the other races, Arawâk, Carib, and Warau, our work has proceeded by regular stages, so to speak; the harvest, whether great or small, having grown up where we had previously sown the seed. But with the Acawoios *all* has been unexpected and surprising. In the hearts of those whom no missionary had ever visited a desire for spiritual light has sprung up—spontaneous to all appearance—but kindled, as we believe, by a Holy and Divine power, which worketh "where it listeth."

To one who watches with interest the ingathering of the aboriginal races, not the least interesting sign has been the presence of the Wapisianas, or Wabean, amongst the other tribes at the great assembly on the Potaro.

The Wapisianas are a different race from any which have hitherto been the subjects of these sketches. They live more inland than the Acawoios, and Sir R. Schomburgk, who knew them well, states that their language differs radically from that of the latter, and from its kindred tongues.

Many of them live on, or within, the frontiers of Brazil. Those within our boundary live amongst the mountains and savannahs through which flow the Rupununi and the Quitaro. In their country stands the pyramid of Ataraipu (or Devil's Rock), one of the most striking natural curiosities of Guiana. It is a granite peak, rising six hundred feet above a wooded base of considerable elevation, and showing on its weather-beaten sides the deep grooves and furrows made by the tropical rains during thousands of years.

Near the Wapisianas live the Atorais, a tribe verging towards extinction. More to the eastward, on the Essequibo, are the Tarumas; the remnant of an unfortunate tribe, which, driven by various calamities, quitted the Brazils during the eighteenth century, and, taking possession of a vacant territory near the head of the Essequibo, have lived there since in seclusion.

There are a few others, poor and feeble races, living near the southern boundary of our colony, and on the skirts of the Acarai mountains, where are the sources of the Essequibo and Corentyn. To them also, as we hope and pray, the Gospel of Christ will soon be borne; perhaps by the Wapisianas, who lie between; or, if it please God, by means of our Acawoio converts, whose long journeys, zeal, and energy these sketches have sufficiently shown.

In God's good time and way the instruments of His work appear.

## XIV.

## THE OLD "HOPE" AND THE NEW.

Early explorations—Raleigh's men on the Corentyn—Carib domination—Indian slave-hunting—The old "Hope" of the Moravians—Its abandonment—Mission of the English Church—The "New Hope"—Visit to Orealla—The Moravian burial-ground—Return.

WHEN the Moravian Mission on the Berbice had been destroyed by the revolted slaves in 1763, as we have stated in our introductory sketch, the brethren removed to the Corentyn. This river, which is next in size to the Essequibo, forms the boundary between Berbice and Surinam.

No flourishing colony has been established on its banks; which, with the exception of a small district on either side near the mouth, have been left to their aboriginal inhabitants. Yet the river is not on that account less interesting in its history, and from a missionary point of view.

The acquaintance of Englishmen with the Corentyn began near the end of the sixteenth century.

The records of that age present to us a picture more curious than edifying.

The maritime nations of Europe were then feeling their way along the shores, and up the rivers of the new world; all alike greedy of gain—always rivals, and often deadly foes to each other.

They who first explored, and attempted to settle in Guiana, perished by sickness and starvation, or by the clubs and arrows of the natives, who were then formidable, and for a long time kept off all intruders.

The aborigines, however, gave a better reception to the English expeditions, commanded (or sent) by Sir Walter Raleigh, than to most others. They looked on him in the light of a powerful and avenging ally, on account of the chastisement he had inflicted on the Spaniards, the report of whose cruelties in Trinidad and elsewhere had spread along the coast, and far into the interior. So when English vessels sent by him, under the command of Captain Masham, sailed up the Corentyn (called by them Coritine), the Indians of the chief town, "Warawalle," received them well, and provided them with canoes and paddlers to ascend the river as far as they could.

The object of the explorers was, of course, to find a way to El Dorado. But, after encountering various obstacles from rapids, they came to the insurmountable one presented by those magnificent falls, which were for centuries after the limit of European navigation there.

Returning to their vessels, they found that ten canoes of Spaniards had come in from the sea during their absence, but had left without hostilities, being too weak to fight. They were, indeed, foraging for food, and had come from a miserable colony on the Essequibo, which had consisted originally of three hundred men. Most of these, the Indians said, had by that time been destroyed, or had died through sickness and starvation. So fared the first adventurers in that wild land.

Amongst the native opposers of the white man, the Caribs were pre-eminent in prowess, and none of their clans have been more famous in tradition than those of the Corentyn. Their usual track, for war or rapine, was up that river to a point above the great cataract; thence westward, across the Berbice and above the head of the Demerara, to the Essequibo and Rupununi. They seldom returned empty from those expeditions. The Macusis and others on the Brazilian boundary were made captives; and the feeble tribes which once dwelt towards the head of the Berbice, and on the upper Corentyn, were wasted away and disappeared altogether.

The captives thus made by the Caribs were, after peace had been established between them and the whites, sold to the Dutch colonists, and this state of things continued till a comparatively recent period. But it ruined the depredators. The vices inseparable from slave-hunting, and the destructive indulgence in fiery rum, enfeebled and consumed

this once dominant race, and the pure Caribs, declining everywhere, are now all but extinct on the Corentyn.

During the latter part of their career, however, they were not left without warning. The Moravian brethren endeavoured to impart to them that Christian teaching which the colonists failed to give.

Dæhne, one of the most energetic and devoted of their number, as early as 1757 had commenced a mission on the Corentyn, which he called "Ephraim." He afterwards removed higher up the river, and the new station then founded he called "Hoop." It existed, amidst many vicissitudes, until after the end of the century. But its troubles then increased greatly. Small-pox swept off the Indian converts, and fire destroyed all the mission buildings. The brethren at length removed to a more promising field of labour among the negroes on the Dutch plantations of Surinam.

Left to themselves, the Indian converts by degrees died off. When Bishop Coleridge, of Barbados, with his archdeacon (afterwards consecrated Bishop of Guiana), visited the place in 1839, he heard a blind old chieftain singing the Hallelujah "of some holy hymn of praise, which he had been taught by the Moravians while a youth." In a few years more, that last relic also had departed.

The next effort was made by the English Church. In 1866 the Rev. W. T. Veness, at the request of the Bishop of Guiana, went through the district

inhabited by the red men; and persevering under many difficulties, at length planted a mission amongst them on the western, or British side of the river.

The same year we were engaged in a missionary expedition to the few Acawoio families who had settled near the falls of the Berbice, and in planting a mission amongst the Arawâks at Coomacka—the second on that river. Those stations, with another amongst the Arawâks on the Mahaicony, which we had planted in 1844—all served by the Berbice clergy—completed the line of Indian missions between the Demerara and the Corentyn.

In February, 1873, I accompanied the bishop to the latter river.

As we were driving along the sea-coast near its mouth, we saw a small and apparently young black tiger spring from some low bush into the road in front of our horse, alarming the animal. Then, as if startled at its own temerity, it bounded with a flying leap into the opposite jungle. That species is exceedingly rare, and I never heard of one so near the sea.

The following day we started from Skeldon, a sugar estate, where there is a chapel, in which the bishop had that morning confirmed a number of Chinese converts. Mr. Heard, an energetic young missionary, who had succeeded Mr. Veness in his work on the Corentyn, was with us.

We were in an open sailing-boat, without tent or awning; but it was the coolest season of the year,

so that even the midday heat was supportable on the open river. It rained, however, the first night, and we all got more or less wet; the consequence of which was an attack of fever, which prostrated Mr. Heard, who, being the latest from England, was then the least "seasoned" of our party.

About noon on the second day we came in sight of the white cliffs of Orealla, the "Warawalle," opposite which Raleigh's men had cast anchor nearly three centuries before, and whence they had sent on their boats to search for El Dorado.

It presents a picturesque scene. As you approach, you pass some craggy sandstone rocks on the right hand, down which a sparkling cascade, called Apoaka, falls in the wet season. Opposite this, on the Surinam side, is the forest-covered site of the old mission, the "Hope" of the Moravians, but which the Indians still call by its ancient name, "Semiri," the *locust* tree.

The white cliffs before you, in the deep bight of the river, are on the British bank. It is from them that the place is named Orealla;[1] that word signifying *chalk* in the Arawâk tongue.

At the farther end of those cliffs, and on the river's bank, we saw a large thatched shed, with a roof like an immense gothic arch coming nearly to the ground. The Indians had erected this, and it

[1] The Caribs also call chalk "Ourealla," and the Waraus "Howrewarra," but the Acawoios "Kāri." The cliffs in question, however, are of white clay and sand, not *chalk*.

formed a spacious and cool place of worship. Close by stood the mission-house with its flag. The mission itself had been named by Mr. Veness the "New Hope;" and the chapel is of the "Epiphany."

The first English explorers of the Corentyn reported the river as populous. They found six Indian towns on its banks. But intercourse with civilized man, small-pox, and rum, had not then done their work as they since have. There were probably not more than three hundred Indians left there at the date of our visit.

The once haughty and dominant Caribs are now scarcely represented. Our congregation consisted chiefly of Arawâks and Waraus, among whom the work of evangelization was going on steadily. The former asked why we had not brought their countrymen "Cornelius," not knowing that he had entered into his rest five years before.

Most of the baptisms and marriages on that occasion were amongst the Waraus. Their old blind chief, "Christmas," a sorcerer, who had strenuously opposed all the efforts of Mr. Veness amongst his people, was on the spot, but did not join the congregation. We found him in the evening, sitting meditatively in his blindness on the brow of the hill, and spoke a few kind words to him. He said but little in reply, and we wondered what his feelings were.

Ere leaving the "New Hope," we of course paid a visit to the "Old," on the opposite side of the river.

It has long since been overgrown by tall forest trees; but under those trees we could still see the outline of the beds, where once had grown the mission cultivation; and a clump of bamboos hard by marks the resting-places of the brethren and their devoted wives. One small stone slab still remains, with an inscription which Mr. Veness had been able to copy some years before, but which time and rain had since rendered nearly illegible. We could see, however, that it was in memory of one of the missionaries' wives, who died in 1802, aged 35 years. We could then find no more, but there had been several others visible when our venerable bishop first visited the spot, with Dr. Coleridge, in 1839.

The men and women, over whose mortal remains the stone memorials were thus perishing, had laboured hard on that spot, amidst many privations and dangers, and had seen their loved work apparently destroyed by disease, fire, and other calamities. It was saddening to reflect on what they had gone through, and its end—as men regard it. Yet we felt that the tradition of their labours was rendering our own task there less difficult, and that if those silent tongues could have spoken from the dust, they would have bidden us "God-speed."

We left the "New Hope" after a stay of a few days, Mr. Heard being still very ill. He rallied, however, on our way down the river.

The first evening of our return passage was very pleasant. The planets Venus and Jupiter were in

their full splendour—west and east—shedding glory and beauty over the soft tropical night, and giving a light equal to that of a crescent moon. By that light we could see distinctly the outlines of the sombre forest, which covered the islands and banks of the river, and were able to avoid the sandy shoals which make its navigation a matter of difficulty, and sometimes of danger.

With the next morning came wind and rain. A heavy squall caught our boat and laid her over, so that water poured in over her lee side ere she righted. We breakfasted at a settler's cottage on the Dutch bank, and then proceeded on our way. The wind continued strong, but our boat was a good sailer, and, after dashing on close-hauled for some hours through darkness and a rough sea, we saw the red blaze of a negro watchman's fire, which guided us to Skeldon, the plantation from which we had started.

# CONCLUSION.

Changes—Last visit of the writer to his old stations—Waramuri Hill—Retrospect.

ABOUT two years after this Mr. Heard was removed to my old mission district, on the opposite, or Venezuelan border of the colony.

He there made such arrangements as the changed circumstances and increased attendance at those stations demanded, built a large and handsome chapel on the parent mission, and made provision for the enlargement of that at Waramuri.

The Acawoios had by that time become desirous of having a mission of their own on the Waiini. They provided the necessary buildings, and Mr. Heard placed Philip, my old interpreter, with them as catechist, the bishop, on his next visit to the Waiini, confirming the appointment.

But the health of our poor Philip, who in past years had done more, under God, than any other person for the conversion of his race, was now broken. He died, and was succeeded by one of his family, trained, like himself, at the Pomeroon

Mission, where their movement towards Christianity had commenced.

Before this extension of our work on the Waiini and, as already related, on the Potáro, we had as many as sixteen missions, in various stages of development, amongst our aborigines. Those stations extend across the colony, and towards the heads of those great streams which traverse its length from south to north.

Not without difficulty and sacrifices, from the days of Mr. Youd, have those missions been established. Their course has often been painfully interrupted by the death or disablement of the mission teacher, as well as by other misfortunes. In my own district I have had to regret the removal successively of nine faithful fellow-helpers.

Yet still, amidst drawbacks of various kinds, the work of propagating the Gospel in Guiana has gone on, both amongst our aboriginal tribes and the Asiatic immigrants on our cultivated coast. In each division of that mission-field God is "giving the increase."[1]

It was consoling to think on these things when, for the last time, I stood on Waramuri Hill, once the site of a village of cannibals, now of a Christian

[1] The erection of a handsome church, for their own use, by our Chinese converts in Georgetown, and of a similar building by our Hindoo converts in Berbice, are evident and cheering proofs, among many others, of the blessing which has followed the efforts of zealous men, who (mostly in addition to heavy parochial work) have laboured to convert our Asiatic immigrants.

mission, and therefore in itself no unfit type of the change for good which has taken place, and is still progressing, in the land.

It was a lovely and peaceful Sunday evening. The Moruca before us was shining in the rays of the setting sun and gliding calmly through a wide extent of forest, in which two lines of taller trees marked the course of tributary streams. My first visits to those rivers had taken place nearly forty years before. Each had its peculiar association. At Washiba Hill, near the head of one, the Caribs had, soon after that visit, made their first attempt at "church"-building; on the other I had met with a most unfriendly reception from the uncouth Waraus; and there also their first favourable movement towards the Gospel had afterwards begun.

A great change had taken place since those days. The people of those races, and of two others, had joined our congregation on that hill, no longer hostile to us, or to each other, but all worshipping together in peace. Though not so numerous as the assembly of two thousand who had there met the governor on his visit to the opened mound, they had become far more decent and civilized, both sexes being now neatly clad, and all apparently better off in their earthly circumstances.

They were just then departing after evensong, and their clean white garments formed an agreeable spectacle as they streamed across the plain, or entered the paths which led to their forest homes. Some companies, who had come by water, were

going to the river-side to re-embark in their canoes, and a number were lingering in groups around to converse with the Rev. P. A. Stevenson, a brother missionary and friend, who had come to help me in the various services.

To bid, without emotion, a last adieu to those old scenes, with their heart-cherished associations, was impossible. But the time had come. Increasing bodily infirmities had warned me that my forest journeys were all ended, and that I must now, with deep thankfulness to Him whose undeserved mercy had protected me so long, leave canoe and wood-skin voyages to younger and stronger men.

May the Divine blessing be on all who seek to spread the knowledge of the Saviour's name amongst the many races and languages of Guiana.

# APPENDIX.

## ON THE MIGRATIONS OF THE ABORIGINAL RACES OF GUIANA IN FORMER DAYS.

THE predatory expeditions of the more warlike races against the industrious and peaceful tribes, which we have noticed in the preceding pages, and which are still carried on in distant parts of the wild interior, must not be confounded with the destructive wars which attended the migrations of ancient days. In those more terrible times tribe after tribe was driven onward, as wave follows wave, by the pressure of those whom they were too feeble to resist.

Those destructive wars and consequent migrations seem to have prevailed from the earliest ages.

In the new world, as in the old, fierce and hardy races from the bleak northern regions have, from time to time, precipitated themselves upon the inhabitants of the genial south. The latest of those great movements—that of the Aztecs and their confederate tribes—has, by their own hieroglyphic records, been brought within the range of history. But of other great political convulsions, whose effects are plainly visible, we have no historical account whatever. Unrecorded are the calamities which destroyed the ancient cities of Central America, whose sculptured stones—overgrown long

since with the vegetation of centuries—now excite the wonder of the explorer.

The weaker races, dislodged by those calamities, would seek shelter where they could. Many probably crossed the isthmus, and sought it on the southern continent.

There also the conquests of the Inca sovereigns, who reigned in Cuzco, and, aided by comparative civilization and its attendant discipline, extended their dominion far and wide, must have caused the migration of many tribes, who were unable to offer successful resistance, yet too high-spirited to submit to their encroachments. And the same results would follow afterwards, when the Spaniards became the invaders, and had broken the power of the children of the Sun.

They who thus retired from a hated yoke would seek the shelter of the boundless forests, through which flow the tributaries of the Amazon and the Orinoco. There, to save themselves from perishing, they would dispossess tribes less powerful than themselves, and seize on the lands they were cultivating. The wild races thus dispossessed would fall, in their turn, on others more feeble still. And when resistance was offered by those who objected to become starving fugitives, war would naturally ensue; and those wars were wars of *extermination*, as we learn from the dim traditions which have come down to us. Some young females might be reserved by the conquerors as slaves and concubines; but death, or a precarious existence as a hunted fugitive, was the usual lot of every male of the vanquished race.

Many tribes must thus have been destroyed in succession, the fugitive survivors of one sometimes uniting with the broken remnant of another for mutual support; and thus producing the great number of tribes at present found, and their endless shades and diversities of language.

In such struggles between conflicting races, it is usual for some one to arise and claim that predominance which desperate valour and success bestow. The Caribs occupied that position at the coming of the white men. Their conquest (and almost total extermination) of the cannibal Cabres at the

bend of the Orinoco made them dominant over all the wild tribes of Guiana, and they were even able for a time to resist the various attempts of European colonists to settle on its shores.

Of the *origin* of the Carib race nothing certain is known. When discovered by Columbus, they were in possession of the smaller West Indian Islands, and had begun to attack the larger.

Humboldt states that the opinion common amongst Europeans, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was that they came from the vicinity of Darien, and that more recently they were supposed to have come from the northern continent.

But the constant tradition of the *Caribs themselves*, both in the islands and on the main, claims Guiana as the cradle of their race, and the Orinoco as the point from which they started on their career of conquest.

The following short vocabulary, in which their language is compared with that of the Orinoco Tamanacs, with that of the Chaymas to the north of that river, and also with that of the Acawoios—who are, in part at least, a cognate tribe—will confirm, as far as language can, the truth of their tradition :—

| Chayma and Tamanac words, given by Humboldt (Narrative, ch. ix). | | | The corresponding words, as spoken by the Caribs and Acawoios, at our missions in B. Guiana. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ENGLISH. | CHAYMA. | TAMANAC. | CARIBI. | ACAWOIO. |
| I. | Ure. | Ure. | Ao, or u. | Yura. |
| Water. | Tuna. | Tuna. | Tona. | Tona. |
| Rain. | Conopo. | Canepo. | Conobo. | Tona. |
| Fire. | Apoto. | Uapto. | Uatu. | Ahpoh. |
| Moon. | Nuna. | Nuna . | Nunoh. | Kapui. |
| House. | Ata. | Aute. | Autu, or Outuh. | Owtuh. |
| Sorcerer. | Piache. | Psiache. | Puiai. | Piatsan. |
| One. | Tibin. | Obin. | Ohwin. | Tegina. |
| Two. | Aco. | Oco. | Oco. | Azara. |
| Three. | Oroa. | Orua. | Oroa. | Osorowa. |
| Flesh. | Pun. | Punu. | Pohno. | Pohn, or Bohn. |
| No (negation). | Pra. | Pra. | Pa. | Purā, or Burā. |

The above dialects, with those of the Arecunas, Macusis, and several other tribes between the bend of the Orinoco

and the Atlantic, belong to one great family, as has been said.

But the languages spoken by the *two coast tribes*, the Arawâk and Warau, differ entirely from the above, and from each other, as the following examples show :—

| ENGLISH. | ARAWAK. | WARAU. |
|---|---|---|
| Water. | Oniabu. | Ho. |
| Fire. | Ikihi. | Eykuno. |
| One. | Abar. | Sakka. |
| Two. | Biama. | Manam. |
| Three. | Kabuin. | Dianam. |

Of these two nations, the Warau, as far as we can ascertain from their mythical legends, claim to be the aboriginal possessors of the land, who were compelled, by the fortune of war, to take refuge in the ita swamps from fierce and exterminating foes. But the facts of their history are lost in the mist of ages.

The historical traditions of the Arawâks, as told to the writer, speak of their arrival on the coast many centuries ago, and of their desperate struggle for existence with a cannibal race (not the Caribs, who came afterwards, but the same, perhaps, which formed the shell-mounds), which struggle resulted in the extermination of the latter.

The language of the Arawâks is almost identical with that spoken in the larger islands at the coming of the Spaniards. In the smaller (called, from their conquerors, the Caribi Islands), the Arawâk males had, before that time, been exterminated. But their language was still preserved at St. Vincent's, Dominica, and elsewhere, by the females of their race, whom the conquering Caribs had spared as slaves and concubines.

There its relics still remain. Through the kind instrumentality of the Bishops of Barbados and Guiana, a small vocabulary of the language spoken by the St. Vincent Caribs was collected for me many years ago by the Rev. T. A. Browne, a service I gratefully acknowledge.

It consisted of forty-nine words. Ten of them, including "Wayeu," the *sun*, and their words for *water*, *tree*, *bird*, *fish*,

*fire*, etc., agree with those spoken by our Caribs in Guiana; ten others, as "Barawa," the *sea*, "Heinyarro," *woman*, and their words for *moon*, *stars*, etc., are Arawâk, with slight variations,—evidently the women's language. Some were of European origin, as "Aragaboos," a *gun*, from the Spanish "Arcabuz." About twenty were unknown to me. They may have been derived from the African dialect spoken by the black Caribs, who were found with the pure race when the island was settled by Europeans, and who are supposed to have sprung from the union of negroes (escaped from the wreck of a slave-ship, or from neighbouring islands) with the native Caribs.

In a series of articles on the Church in the West Indies, by the Right Rev. Bishop H. H. Parry (which appeared in *Mission Life*, in 1875), we read that the black Caribs in St. Vincent's, numbering about two hundred, and the *yellow* Caribs, as the purer race are called, numbering about five hundred, have been converted to Christianity, and "are now, without exception, members of the Anglican Church, and under the regular pastoral care of the rector of the parish to which they respectively adjoin."

To the writer, and those who have laboured with him amongst the Caribs of the southern continent, the above was good news—tidings to increase their gratitude and praise. For it showed that the Lord was, in other places also, gathering up by His Gospel the "fragments that remain" of this once valiant and formidable race, as well as those of gentler and less famous tribes.

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# APPENDIX II.

## ON THE CONTENTS OF THE CANNIBAL MOUNDS.

THE kitchen-middens, whose discovery is mentioned in the preceding pages, were carefully searched for whatever might throw light on their history, and the condition of their makers. Amongst the shells and bones, of which they are chiefly composed, we found a few broken axe-heads, and other stone implements of the rudest kind. But there were no fragments of pottery in the more ancient deposits. The nearest approach to such was seen in some clayey slabs, which, as baking plates, had been on the fire.

The makers of those ancient mounds must have been lower than the poorest tribes in Guiana at the present day, and infinitely beneath the natives of the West Indian islands at the time of their discovery. In the accounts given of the latter we see a partial degree of civilization; we read of chieftains whose manners were comparatively refined, and who appeared in semi-regal state, wearing coronals and bands of green and white stones connected with plates of gold. Such ornaments were also worn by the natives of the coast of Paria, with the addition of pearls, obtained from the islands to the northward.

It is needless to say that we found in Waramuri mound nothing of that kind. A few lumps of red earth, such as the wilder tribes now use to tinge their bodies, were all that could have been used for personal adornment, though doubtless those savages, in their festive dances, decorated themselves, as many now do, with feathers, beetles'-wings, the teeth of animals, and shells.

When, in prosecuting our researches, we discovered and opened the kitchen-midden on Cabacaburi hill (for, without knowing it, we had planted each mission on the site of an ancient cannibal village), we found the lower strata of the

mound to consist only of such articles as had been dug up at Waramuri. But a few fragments of Indian pottery, found about five feet from the surface, showed that some advance in the useful arts had taken place, ere the upper layers of shells had been covered with their present coating of black mould. While searching for those fragments we came upon the first (and only) personal ornaments yet found—two small silver plates, between which lay a skull, the only one found unbroken. They had evidently been attached by strings to the ears of the victim when slain. The fragment of a loop of cotton cord still remains, unperished, in the hole of one of them. A few feet from the crown of that relic lay the remains of the lower limbs of a female of slight and delicate form. They were, like the cranium, unbroken, whiter and sounder than the other bones found there. But where were the remains of the body, arms, and feet? Save a portion of the pelvis, they could nowhere be found.

While everything previously discovered in those mounds indicated a condition of mankind similar to that of savage animals, those little silver trinkets spoke of tastes and feelings approaching those of civilized woman. Their position, only a few feet from the surface, with the unbroken condition and comparative soundness of the bones found with them, seemed to point to a period nearer to our own times.

Fragments of brick (probably relics of the first Dutch attempt at colonization, in 1580) were found near them ; and above these were other shells and bones. But in those upper layers *no traces of apparent cannibalism were found.*

It seems, from the evidence of those mounds, that the dismal practice, which tradition has always associated with the shores of Guiana, prevailed there in times long anterior to those on which history sheds a feeble light, and that it continued until Europeans had established their ascendency there.

The retrospect is a gloomy one. We have, however, cause for thankfulness that, with respect to the tribes in our colony, these things are now of the past, and that our Indians abhor them as we do.

# APPENDIX III.

## ON THE RISKS ATTENDING NAVIGATION AMIDST CATARACTS AND RAPIDS.

THE upper courses of all the great rivers of Guiana are obstructed by falls and rapids. Those on the Essequibo and its larger tributaries are especially numerous and formidable. Those impediments to navigation have prevented that noble river from attaining the commercial importance which its great length and partial communication with the rivers of Brazil would otherwise have given it.

To surmount those obstacles, it is necessary in some places to haul or carry your craft overland at the side of the fall. At others, advantage is taken of the eddies which are formed at the base of the huge rocks which intercept the stream. The Indians pass from rock to rock by wading, leaping, or swimming, and by means of a hawser haul the boat from one resting point to another, the steersman (keeping his seat, and sometimes lashed to it) striving with his large paddle to guide her course as best he can. The roar of the water, dashing, foaming, and hissing amidst the surrounding rocks, renders this operation as exciting as it is difficult.

Still more exciting and difficult is the task of *descending* those rapids. The safety of all then depends on their perfect steadiness, and on the bowman and steersman acting in concert and with instant decision. The craft is kept in the very centre of the current, one of her best hands kneeling in the bow, with quick eye and ready paddle, and the rest of the crew exerting their strength to give her headway. Darting swiftly along, she arrives at the edge of the fall, and, pointing downwards, shoots into the surf below it, dashing it up on either side, and leaving only her crew visible. If all be well, rising above the foam, she obeys the guiding paddles in stem and stern, and dances over the tumbling waves; while her excited crew, with a triumphant cry, exult at their success.

Not always, alas! is this the case. If the craft be too heavily laden, if it be badly managed in stem or stern, or if its occupants become excited and unsteady, the risk is very great.

Accidents frequently happen, not only to the fragile craft of the Indians, but even to boats which are well built, and manned with experienced crews. That by which, in 1865, Captain Beresford, son-in-law of the governor, and six others, lost their lives in attempting to "shoot" the lower falls of the Masaruni, will long be painfully remembered in the colony.

Most calamitous also, and closely connected with our mission work, was the sad accident in September, 1881, by which the Rev. Mr. Pierce, whose zeal has been mentioned in the preceding pages, lost his life in returning from his second visit to the Potaro mission.

He had taken his family with him, and their boat, badly laden, was capsized in the Marihia, one of the lower falls of the Essequibo. Both parents, two daughters, the youngest son, and a servant girl, were drowned. One son, a lad of twelve, emerged from the death-struggle amidst the whirling currents, and, with the boat hands, reached the shore.

This distressing event was a serious loss to our missions, and deeply felt by the Church at large.

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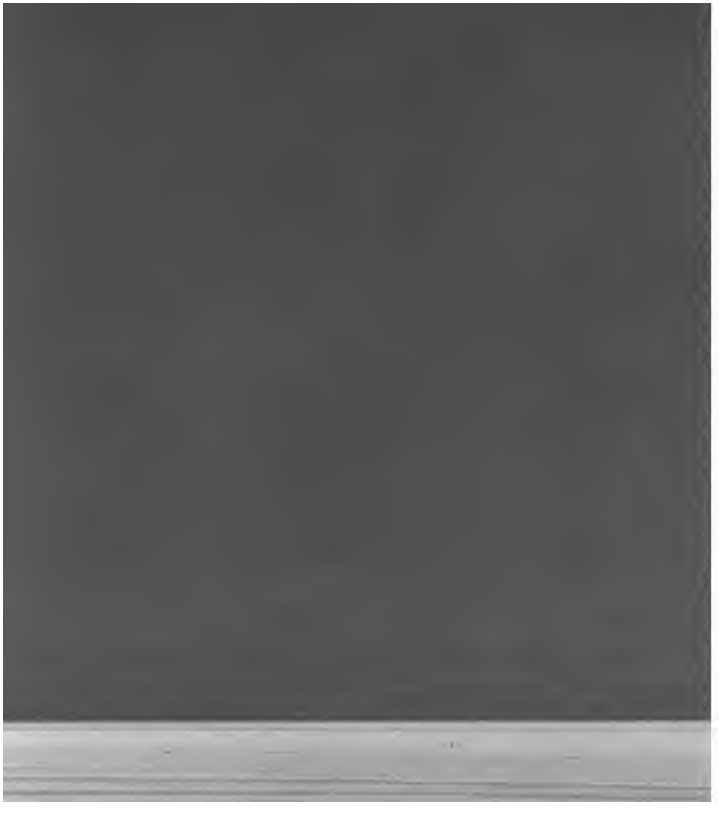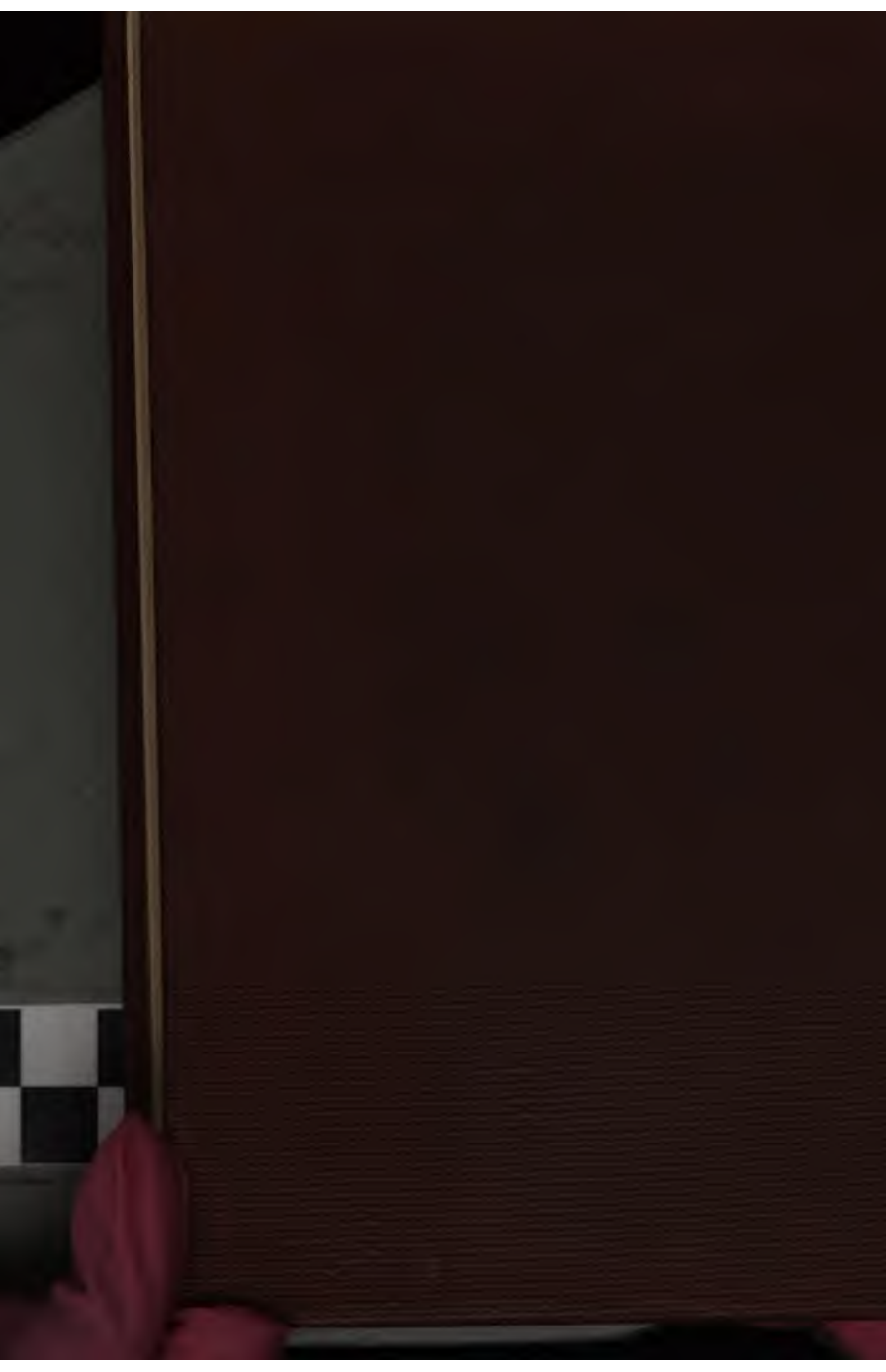
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